

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE**

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 6th December 2012
Boardroom, Provost's House

Present: Professor Veronica Campbell, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Martin Fellenz, School of Business

Professor Isabel Rozas, School of Chemistry

Professor Simon Wilson, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Ebrahim Al Awadhi, School of Dental Science

Professor Melissa Sihra, School of Drama, Film & Music

Professor Conor McGuckin, School of Education

Professor Sam Slote, School of English

Professor Martine Cuypers, School of Histories & Humanities

Professor Neville Cox, School of Law

Professor Christer Gobl, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences

Professor Stefan Sint, School of Mathematics

Professor John Gormley, School of Medicine

Professor Anna Davies, School of Natural Sciences

Professor Anne-Marie Brady, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor Lidia Tajber, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Professor Gillian Wylie, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics

Professor Tim Hicks, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Professor Stephanie Holt, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Mr Martin McAndrew, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)

Mr Andrew McEwan, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President (*Ex officio*)

Ms Alex Anderson, CAPSL Representative (*Ex officio*)

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

Ms Lee Mills, Information System Services Representative

Apologies: Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology

Professor Henry Rice, School of Engineering

Professor Tim Foster, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Jurgen Uhlich, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies

Professor Mauro Ferreira, School of Physics

Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Research

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

GS/12-13/15 Minutes of 1st November 2012

The minutes of the meeting of 1st November 2012 were approved by the Committee

as circulated.

It was clarified that the required minimum 10 ECTS for PhD students were to be taken over the course of the Ph.D., not necessarily before the student is confirmed on the PhD register. The Dean informed the Committee that this requirement would be added to the Calendar Part 2 for 2013-14.

The Dean agreed that the Progress Report form should be amended to monitor the ECTS attained as students enter the final year of their PhD so that DPGLTs can ensure that the required modules are taken before submission of the thesis.

GS/12-13/016 Matters Arising

The Dean informed the Committee that over 200 TCD research project proposals had been submitted for the Brazilian Science Without Borders scheme. These will be sent to the IUA for uploading to the designated portal and will also be made available on the Graduate Studies Office website, categorised by strategic area.

GS/12-13/17 Taught Masters and College Funding Process

The Dean introduced the Vice Provost-Chief Academic Officer, Professor Linda Hogan, who thanked the Committee for the invitation to discuss the Annual Budgetary Cycle and funding model.

Professor Hogan explained that an Annual Budgetary Cycle has been introduced as the new funding model with which to allocate resources to Schools and noted that two other models (ARAM; RPM) had been proposed and developed previously but neither had been fully implemented. Due to a significant decline in the State Grant income the historic allocation of resources is no longer fit for purpose. Professor Hogan advised the committee that 70% of core funding is allocated to staff costs.

The current position of the Annual Budgetary Cycle is that budgets (pay and non-pay) are set in advance following consultation between the Head of School, Faculty Dean and VP-CAO. A 1% transfer of the overall College budget has been made from the COO areas to the Academic areas. Each School will receive a primary allocation to ensure all agreed costs are covered. Secondary allocations will also be made to Schools and further discussion is to be held on how this will be distributed. It will be based on increased activity especially for postgraduate taught courses, providing incentives for Schools to increase income; and there will be investment for new initiatives.

Short-term forecasts indicate that there will be operational deficits until 2015/16 but income generation will be used to close the gap and the cost base will continue to be reviewed.

There were some concerns raised by the Committee over the ABC model including:

- Schools that do have opportunity to grow and generate income from taught courses are not sufficiently incentivised as the direct fee income will no longer be transferred into a School account
- If allocation is based on expenditure rather than student numbers there may be a temptation to set higher than necessary course running costs
- Although the allocation of budget will be set in advance it may still be too late to know the staffing budget in order to recruit the staff that will deliver the course. The Vice Provost-CAO clarified that this issue was dealt with through the strategic staff planning process.
- Staff do realise cuts need to be made but are demoralised

Professor Hogan confirmed that she was aware of these concerns and the issues are being explored further. Professor Fellenz offered to provide more information on a potential funding plan that he had given some thought to. Professor Hogan expressed

interest in returning to a future GSC meeting to continue this discussion and discuss other areas such as strategic staffing.

GS/12-13/18 Progression and Awards – Publication of Results

The Dean introduced Dr Niamh Harty and Dr John Rochford and asked them to speak to the circulated document. They explained that Stage 4 of the GeneSIS project includes the recording of results of academic assessments in the SITS system for all modules on taught courses. There will also be 'Progression and Award' functionality for storing end of year results and award classifications.

Approval was sought from the Committee on the proposals in the circulated document which included five main points:

- Release of results to students – students would use their portal to view results which will be released on a modular basis.
- Release of results to staff including tutors – this would be viewable only to staff relevant to the student and will be available at the same time the information is released to the student
- Publication of results by 'Class Result List' – this will include changing current practice and publishing this by Examination Number for all students to ensure anonymity. A Class Result List including student name and number will be retained by College but not published.
- Ordering of students on 'Class Lists' – it will be possible to order students' results by merit and grouped by grade or award classification, as appropriate, which is becoming increasingly important for providing references, etc.
- Clear demarcation of ownership of module-related data – the ownership of all module data (and responsibility for maintaining correct module records) rests with the Discipline or School delivering the module which may be a change in practice for some inter-disciplinary modules.

In answer to a query it was clarified that reports would be created to automatically generate the Class Results Lists, etc.

The Committee approved the document.

GS/12-13/19 Proposal from Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) for validated course (Master of Music in Performance)

The Dean introduced Deborah Kelleher from the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) and explained that the circulated proposal is part of a new initiative between TCD and RIAM.

Deborah Kelleher explained that the Master of Music in Performance course already exists and is run by RIAM and validated by DCU. Applicants undergo a rigorous audition process and RIAM have a proven track record in producing graduates that have gone on to significant professional and international careers. The course requires the student to successfully complete modules in Principal Study, Chamber Music, Performance electives, Academic electives and Professional Practice.

As RIAM are now an Associated College of TCD there will be no cost to Trinity for this course.

It was noted that in Section 5.3 Role of External Examiners the sentence "External Examiners' details will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies for information" will be changed to "External Examiners' details will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval".

In answer to a query it was confirmed that as the Masters is a full two year programme it is 120 ECTS and there is a 60 credit option for those who wish to exit with a

Diploma after one year.

The Dean noted that this course was a positive step as part of the Creative Arts Strategy in TCD, following the links that are already in place with the LIR and the synergy that already exists between RIAM and the School of Drama, Film and Music at TCD, especially with the new Masters in Music Composition.

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

GS/12-13/20 Guidelines for students and staff on the modification of examination and assessment arrangements for students with disabilities

The Dean introduced Mr Declan Treanor and explained that the document circulated was for information and discussion only at this stage. Mr Treanor explained that, historically, the "Guidelines for Students and staff on the modification of examination and assessment arrangements for students with disabilities" was intended for undergraduate students only but increasing numbers have meant that this is now extended to postgraduate students also. The document has been amended to take into account changes to the College Calendar at the end of the last academic year and the adoption of the national Disability Advisors Working Network (DAWN) approved (November 2012) 'Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for the Granting of Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations to Students with Disabilities' (also circulated). DAWN represents those staff of all Universities, a number of Institutes of Technology, NCAD and NCI, with responsibility for the provision of support to students with disabilities. This policy is the outcome of work undertaken by DAWN in developing standardised assessment procedures for students with disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland. The aim is to ensure that provisions remain the same for students transferring across institutions in Ireland. The document outlines how accommodations are made and what accommodations can be provided for students with a permanent or long-term disability.

It was queried what happens for courses where the Examinations Office do not administer the exams? The document references the Senior Lecturer so this may need to be extended to state Senior Lecturer *or* Dean of Graduate Studies.

Mr Treanor noted that there would be additional feedback from the Examinations Office incorporated into the document and the Dean confirmed that it would be brought back to a future Graduate Studies Committee meeting for noting.

GS/12-13/21 Trinity Teaching Award for Postgraduate Students

The Dean explained how at present Schools are not able to recognise or award postgraduate students who are actively engaged in supporting undergraduate student learning through their role as laboratory demonstrators or teaching assistants (TAs). With the Trinity Teaching Award for Postgraduate Students academic staff would nominate postgraduate students from their Schools and the nominated students will then be asked to submit a 2-page outline of their approach to supporting undergraduate student learning. The nomination form and the submission from the postgraduate student will be assessed by a review panel. Up to five prizes may be awarded (€500, a certificate of achievement and a commemoration trophy). The funding of this award has been made possible by funds formerly (in 2007) provided by the Graduate Students' Union to CAPSL.

It was queried whether members of the panel could observe, in person or by video, the nominee teaching in order to assess this. It was suggested that logistically it might be easier to set up a 10-15 minute example of teaching for each of the nominees in front of the panel, although this would be in an artificial environment.

The Dean confirmed that the final process would be brought back to the Committee for approval.

Section B for noting and approval

1. The Committee approved the restructuring of the part-time M.Sc. in Health Informatics, School of Computer Science and Statistics, which will ensure 60 ECTS are delivered in Year 1 (of the 2 Year programme) sufficient for a Postgraduate Diploma to be awarded if a student exits after Year 1.
2. The Committee approved the restructuring of the part-time M.Sc. in Management of Information Systems, School of Computer Science and Statistics, which will ensure 60 ECTS are delivered in Year 1 (of the 2 Year programme) sufficient for a Postgraduate Diploma to be awarded if a student exits after Year 1.
3. The Committee approved the restructuring of the part-time M.Sc. in Technology and Learning, School of Computer Science and Statistics, which will ensure 60 ECTS are delivered in Year 1 (of the 2 Year programme) sufficient for a Postgraduate Diploma to be awarded if a student exits after Year 1.
4. The Committee approved the change of name and award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Statistics to the Postgraduate Certificate in Statistics
5. The Committee approved the change of name of the M.Sc. in Political Science to the M.Sc. in Politics and Public Policy.
6. The Committee noted and approved the establishment of the Glynn Travel Bursary to support postgraduate students in their latter years of study to participate in international research conferences. The appreciation of this bequest from the late Dr Tom Glynn was noted.

Section C for noting

1. The Committee noted the memo from CAPSL in relation to Trinity College Virtual Learning Environment: Blackboard Learn 9.1

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10.55am.

Prof. Veronica Campbell

Date: 2nd January 2013