



A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held on 18 May 2021 at 2.00 pm via Zoom.

Present: Professor Kevin Mitchell, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (*Chair*)
Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary
Professor Catherine McCabe, Dean of Students
Professor Aidan Seery, Senior Tutor
Professor Áine Kelly, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education
Professor Graeme Murdock, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Common Architecture
Professor Jennifer O'Meara, School of Creative Arts
Professor Andrew Loxley, School of Education
Professor Brendan O'Connell, School of English
Professor Robert Armstrong, School of Histories and Humanities
Professor Neville Cox, School of Law
Professor Breffni O'Rourke, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Professor Elizabeth Nixon, School of Psychology
Professor Michael Wycherley, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Professor Stan Houston, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Jacob Erickson, School of Religion
Professor Clair Gardiner, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Jonathan Dukes, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Nicola Marchetti, School of Engineering
Professor Juan Pablo Labrador, School of Genetics & Microbiology
Professor John Stalker, School of Mathematics
Professor Carlos Rocha, School of Natural Sciences
Professor David O'Regan, School of Physics
Professor Derek Sullivan, School of Dental Science
Professor Joe Harbison, School of Medicine
Professor Damien Brennan, School of Nursing & Midwifery
Professor Astrid Sasse, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Jake Byrne, Academic Director of Tangent
Ms Megan O'Connor, Education Officer, Students' Union

Apologies: Mr Sameer Shaikh, Student Representative
Professor Norah Campbell, Trinity Business School
Professor Rachel Hoare, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
Professor Eoin Scanlan, School of Chemistry

In attendance: Ms Lucy Shah, Academic Affairs; Ms Sorcha De Brunner, Academic Affairs; Ms Linda Darbey, Assistant Academic Secretary; Ms Siobhán Dunne, Library Representative; Ms Roisin Smith, Quality Officer; Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services; Professor David Shepard, School of Religion; Professor Aileen Patterson (for item USC/20-21/084); Professor Tristan McLoughlin, School of Mathematics (for item USC/20-21/085); Professor Brian Broderick, School of Engineering, Ms Niamh Burke, Associate Director-Partnerships, Ms Ellie Buckout, E3 Student Recruitment and Admissions Officer (for item USC/20-21/086).

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies requested permission for the meeting to be recorded for minute taking purposes. He advised that previous recordings of USC had been deleted. He welcomed Professor David Shepherd to the meeting as a guest.

USC/20-21/082 Minutes of the meeting of 13 April 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 13 April 2021 were approved.

- USC/20-21/083 Matters arising**
USC/20-21/073 The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that Council noted and approved the proposal for the Trinity Elective in 'Black Studies'.
- USC/20-21/077** The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that Council approved the request for a derogation from the 30/70 undergraduate degree calculation for students in Middle Eastern and European Languages and Culture entering Junior Sophister from 2021/22 to 2024/25.
- USC/20-21/078** The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies reported that Council noted and approved the proposal for a Revised Timetabling Policy.
- USC/20-21/081ii** The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies reported that Council noted and approved the proposal for the Amended Additional Degree Destinations for the International Foundation Programme.

USC/20-21/084 National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

A presentation from Professor Aileen Patterson, School of Medicine, 'Consensus Statement for Professional Identity Formation of students in Healthcare Programmes', dated 12 May 2021, was circulated, and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed her to the meeting. Professor Patterson provided members with an overview of the project, explaining how and why the consensus statement was developed, noting that phase one of the project was exploratory. She reported that phase two is focusing on the four themes and recommendations that emerged from phase one: developmental process-growth, clinical environments and community, role modelling and programme development, assessment, feedback and remediation. She noted that the project is now at the dissemination stage.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies thanked her for her presentation, commenting that the project is welcomed. Responding to a query from a member on whether the findings could be used across other faculties, Professor Patterson advised that she would be happy to share findings. Responding to a member's comment that it is important to have cultural diversity in the literature review given the cultural diversity of students on these courses, she agreed, noting that a new member of the project had been appointed and would be bringing their expertise on this.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies thanked Professor Aileen Patterson for her presentation and she withdrew from the meeting.

USC/20-21/085 Course proposal for a Dual Degree Programme in Mathematics with Columbia University

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A proposal from the School of Mathematics, dated 19 April 2021, was circulated and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed Professor Tristan McLoughlin, School of Mathematics to the meeting. Professor McLoughlin provided members with a brief overview of the proposal, noting that it is similar to the other dual degree programmes with Columbia University, and will result in a B.A. (Mod.) in Mathematics from Trinity, and a B.A. from Columbia University. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies queried how the 30 ECTS credits, needed for the award from Trinity, are made up by students. Professor McLoughlin explained that it is proposed that a literature review (10 ECTS credits) is completed by students in their Junior Sophister year, and a research project (20 ECTS credits) is completed in their Senior Sophister year, with remote supervision from Trinity staff. He noted that students will be made aware of these extra requirements and support and flexibility will be provided, as appropriate. He advised that there is a possibility of students being co-supervised by staff in Columbia, and that it is hoped that research connections will be developed there. He confirmed that no extra staff will be required due to the small student numbers proposed for the programme.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies thanked Professor McLoughlin, and he withdrew from the meeting.

Decision/Action USC/20-21/085: USC approved the course proposal for a Dual Degree Programme in Mathematics, with Columbia University, and recommended it to Council.

USC/20-21/086 E3-STEM Study Abroad Pilot Programme

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A memorandum and a presentation from the E3-Global Relations Subgroup, dated 10 May 2021, were circulated, and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed Professor Brian Broderick, Chair of the E3-Global Relations Committee, Ms. Niamh Burke, Global Relations Office (GRO) and Ms. Ellie Buckhout, E3, to the meeting. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies gave a brief introduction to the item, commenting that the idea is to offer a co-ordinated programme of modules with additional services to visiting students to Trinity under E3. The Chair of E3-Global Relations Committee provided members with a brief context for the development of the pilot programme. He explained that the responsibility of the E3-Global Relations (GR) Subgroup is to monitor and optimise the marketing and applications process in relation to non-EU student recruitment. He advised that it became apparent that one group of potential students were not catered for by existing structures, noting that this cohort is comprised of visiting and study abroad fee-paying students, usually in the Senior Freshmen and Junior Sophister years. He then spoke to the presentation, outlining what the programme includes, and noting key items, particularly that the programme will be monitored by the E3-GR Subgroup. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies added that students will still apply through the central admissions process, but that this will now happen through a co-ordinating structure in order to attract more visiting students.

Responding to a query from a member, the E3 representative advised that the core tuition fee will remain the same, but that there will be additional fees for the programme. The ADUSE queried the proposed student numbers and capacities for the programme, noting that numbers are tight on the Science course curriculum already. The GRO representative confirmed that the initial cohort will be a small group of 10/11 students to pilot the programme and noted that it can be scaled up if there is strong interest. The E3 representative added that schools will still have control over these students' admission to modules. The Chair of E3-GR Subgroup confirmed that three E3 schools have approved a list of modules that can be offered. The ADUSE clarified that Freshmen modules are run by the Science course office and requested that the list of modules be provided to her so she can share this with them. The Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning (DUTL) from the School of Natural Sciences requested this also. The College Tutor requested that appropriate support be provided to this cohort through the programme as they do not have access to College Tutors, and the Chair of E3-GR Subgroup agreed that this is important and would be taken on board.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies thanked Professor Broderick, Ms Burke and Ms Buckhout and they withdrew from the meeting.

Decision/Action USC/20-21/086: USC supported the E3-STEM Study Abroad Pilot Programme.

USC/20-21/087 Senior Lecturer's Annual Report 2019/20

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A draft version of the Senior Lecturer's Annual Report for 2019/20, dated May 2021, was circulated along with a presentation, also dated May 2021. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that the report draws heavily on data contained in the Academic Registry's Annual Report and he thanked the Assistant Academic Secretary, Ms Linda Darbey, and Ms Sorcha De Brunner, Academic Affairs, for their work in preparing the document.

Speaking to his presentation, he brought the meeting through information related to the three main sections of the report:

- Overview of developments 2019/20
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Progression and Student Lifecycle (Post-Admission)

The high percentage of applicants from Dublin and Leinster was discussed, with members noting that until there is an increase in the provision of Trinity accommodation, the number of applicants from outside Leinster is unlikely to rise. The Quality Officer commented that more detailed data relating to progression and retention of students would be useful to have in the Senior Lecturer's Annual Report.

Decision USC/20-21/087: USC noted the draft Senior Lecturer's Annual Report for 2019/20 and recommended it to Council.

USC/20-21/088 Widening Participation Group Report

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A draft version of the Widening Participation Group (WPG) Report, from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated May 2021, was circulated along with a presentation, also dated May 2021.

Speaking to his presentation, he brought the meeting through information related to some of the main areas of the report:

- The WPG overview and remit
- The WPG work programme
- Entry routes for new entrants
- Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)
- Progression Rates
- Graduation Rates
- Degree Grade breakdown

It was noted by a member that it would be useful to see data for progression rates as students rise from one year to the next. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies responded that this data is available, and that the majority of student attrition occurs from Junior Freshmen to Senior Freshmen, and Senior Freshmen to Junior Sophister. He noted that this data is useful as it reveals where students most need support. Responding to this, the Students' Union Education Officer advised that students need to be supported from their point of entry onwards. A member queried whether the mechanism used to extract the data for the WPG report could be used to extract data on international students and the Director of Student Services confirmed that this would be possible.

Decision USC/20-21/088: USC noted the draft Widening Participation Group Report and recommended it to Council.

USC/20-21/089 Calendar Changes 2021/22

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i. General Regulations 2021/22

The General Regulations for 2021/22 were circulated showing amendments via tracked changes. Ms Sorcha De Brunner, Academic Affairs highlighted the proposed main changes.

The first related to Section 29 regarding the credit weighting of courses across semesters. Text had been edited here to reflect the Trinity Education Project progression and award regulation related to a balanced credit load in each semester.

The second change related to Section 35 where text was inserted relating to a student's entitlement to receive feedback on coursework submitted during the teaching term, in line with the Return of Coursework Policy.

The third change related to Section 73 where the word examination was replaced by the word assessment, in relation to 'off-books' students.

ii. Memorandum from Ms Sorcha De Brunner, Academic Affairs, dated 14 May 2021.

Ms Sorcha De Brunner spoke to the memorandum which gave members a brief overview of the main changes to the course sections of the Calendar Part II for 2021/22. These included the provision of a new summary section on the Common Architecture to capture its structures and main features and recording information about the award type and National Framework of Qualifications level of non-degree awards. She advised that she was concentrating on amending entries for particular two-subject courses that will be phased out now that entry to the particular subject combinations is available through the Trinity Joint Honours programme. She noted that there will be some clarification in the language related to the degree calculation as courses transition to the JS:30/SS:70 degree calculation. She advised that she was in the process of contacting schools and course offices in relation to the foregoing.

USC noted the most up-to-date versions of the following sections:

- iii. Common Architecture**
- iv. Trinity Joint Honours**
- v. Two Subject Moderatorship**
- vi. Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**
- vii. Faculty of Health Sciences**
- viii. Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics**
- ix. Non-faculty courses**
- x. Validated courses**
- xi. Scholarship section**

Decision USC/20-21/089(i): USC noted and approved the proposed changes to the General Regulations for 2020/21.

Decision USC/20-21/089(ii): USC supported the main areas of change to be implemented for the Calendar 2021/22 and noted the most up-to-date versions of the faculty and course entry sections.

USC/20-21/090 Continuity of Teaching

i. Digital Trinity 2 (DT2)

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised members of the DT2 timeline, explaining that Open Module Enrolment for students who had sat at the reassessment period would begin on the 13 September 2021. He noted that the change of mind period would also take place at this time. He added that it is understood that this timing is not ideal, but that it is hoped it will be a fast process. Responding to comments from a member on whether anything could be done to mitigate the impact this will have on students who chose to defer, he advised that this had been considered, but that there is no mechanism that would allow for this in the system. He noted that there may be scope for manual intervention for a small number of students, adding that the Undergraduate Common Architecture Office is examining this possibility.

ii. Mandatory Year Abroad

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies reported that in 2020/21 the mandatory year abroad had been optional due to COVID and that the same approach

was being proposed for 2021/22. He advised that the proposal had already been approved by the Global Relations Committee. He noted that content will need to be provided to students who opt to stay in Dublin for the year.

iii. Reassessment Session

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised members that contingency days for the reassessment session had been approved by the Trinity Living with Covid Group, noting that the reassessment session is scheduled for August 30 - September 4 2021 and the contingency days scheduled for 26 -28 August 2021. He noted that the 27 August would be used first if necessary, with the other days approved to be used as necessary. Responding to a member's query on whether schools could set the window for returning assessments, he confirmed that this can be done.

iv. Survey on Assessment

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies updated members on the survey sent by Academic Registry to schools on their plans for the following year for assessments. He acknowledged that this had been a large amount of information to ask for in a short timeframe and advised that this information would now be collected over a longer period to enable schools to respond. He informed members that the RDS had not been booked as an external venue for assessments in 2021/22. He advised that a survey would be circulated to DUTLs to gather data on the desired forms of assessments and the rationale behind it.

Some members commented that an important factor in deciding forms of assessment is the availability of online proctoring for assessments that need it. It was also noted that the system for administering online and open book assessments over the last year had fallen to the local level, and that this needs to become more centralised again, and that schools need further resources. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that this call for resources from schools has been recognised and will be looked at. The Director of Student Services agreed that she will discuss the provision of centralised support with Academic Registry. On the issue of online proctoring, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies reported that no solution had been found that solved all of the issues that arise with it. He noted that it is hoped that there will be no need for online proctoring going forward as these types of assessments should be able to occur face-to-face. Responding to a comment from a member on whether face-to-face assessments will be facilitated, he advised that as many schools are happy with online assessments, there should be enough space on campus to facilitate some in person examinations where needed. He explained that the decision making for these face-to-face assessments needs to be pedagogical and academically driven. The DUTL from the School of Natural Science advised that his school had returned the survey on assessment, but had yet to receive a response.

v. Update on Teaching Plans

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies reported to members that it is likely that teaching in 2021/22 will be in a hybrid format. He noted that the intention would be for some activities to be online with others taking place face-to-face. He advised that planning work is ongoing with Estates and Facilities on spaces around college.

Decision/Action USC/20-21/090(i): USC approved the proposal to make the mandatory year abroad, in those courses where it is mandatory, optional for 2021/22.

Decision/Action USC/20-21/090(ii): USC approved the scheduling of the contingency days for the reassessment session.

USC/20-21/091 Any Other Business

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised members that this would be his last meeting of USC, and thanked members for all their work over the year, particularly those who were also finishing up their terms. He advised members that this would be the last meeting for the Secretary of USC, Ms Lucy Shah, and thanked her for her support over the year. The Academic Secretary thanked the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies for his leadership over his term. Members thanked the outgoing Students' Union Education Officer for all her work over the year.

USC/20-21/092 Minutes (Section B)

USC noted and approved the following set of minutes:

i. Undergraduate Common Architecture Governance Committee

Meeting minutes of 30 March 2021.

ii. Associated Colleges Degree Committee (MIE)

Draft meeting minutes of 20 April 2021.

In particular, USC noted and approved **ACDC/20-21/028** on the curriculum revisions to the Bachelor in Education programme.

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iii. Associated Colleges Degree Committee (RIAM)

Draft meeting minutes of 5 May 2021.

In particular, USC noted and approved **RIAM/ACDC/20-21/021** related to curriculum revisions, whereby the courses in 'Music Composition' and in 'Music Performance' would be combined structurally to create one course to be called 'Music Performance and Composition', which would lead to the Bachelor in Music (Mus.B.). These changes would be implemented for new entrants in 2022/23.

Related to the foregoing, USC noted that entry to the course leading to the Bachelor in Music Composition would be suspended for 2021/22.

iv. Widening Participation Group

Meeting minutes of 16 November 2020.

USC/20-21/093 Items for noting (Section C)

USC noted and approved, where necessary, the following items/documents:

i. Mature Student Application Process

Memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 27 April 2021.

ii. USC Self Evaluation survey

Memorandum from Ms Lucy Shah, dated 12 May 2021.

iii. USC dates for next year

Memorandum from Ms Lucy Shah, dated 12 May 2021.

iv. Grade Conversion Tables

Memorandum from the Global Relations Office, dated April 2021.

v. Submission of Course Proposals Deadline (Reminder)

Memorandum from Ms. Sorcha De Brunner, dated 12 May 2021.