



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

**XX = Council relevance**

**A meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was held on 21 February 2017 at 2.15pm in the Board Room.**

- Present:**
- Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer, Professor Gillian Martin (*Chair*)
  - Academic Secretary, Ms Patricia Callaghan
  - Senior Tutor, Professor Aidan Seery
  - Dean of Students, Professor Kevin O'Kelly
  - Professor Elaine Moriarty, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
  - Professor Cathriona Russell, School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology
  - Professor Brian Brewer, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
  - Professor David Prendergast, School of Law
  - Professor John Walsh, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
  - Professor Louis Brennan, School of Business
  - Professor Kevin Mitchell, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education
  - Professor Paschalis Karageorgis, School of Mathematics
  - Professor Imelda Coyne, School of Nursing and Midwifery
  - Professor Kevin Conlon, School of Medicine
  - Professor Pauline Sloane, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
  - Professor Michael Bridge, School of Chemistry
  - Professor Frank Wellmer, School of Genetics and Microbiology
  - Professor Jarlath Killeen, School of English
  - Professor Peter Cherry, School of Histories and Humanities
  - Professor Eric Weitz, School of Drama, Film and Music
  - Professor Charles Patterson, School of Physics
  - Professor Elizabeth Nixon, School of Psychology
  - Professor Keith Johnston, School of Education
  - Professor Robbie Gilligan, School of Social Work and Social Policy
  - Mr Dale Whelehan, Education Officer, Students' Union
  - Mr Colm O'Halloran, Student Representative
- Apologies:**
- Professor Derek Sullivan, School of Dental Science
  - Professor Mark Hennessy, School of Natural Sciences
  - Professor Mike Brady, School of Computer Science and Statistics
  - Professor Sarah Smyth, Director of TSM
  - Professor Alan O'Connor, School of Engineering
  - Professor Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
- In attendance:** Ms Elaine Egan; Dr Alison Oldam, Director of Student Services; Mr Declan Coogan, International Student Recruitment Officer for item USC/16-17/035; Vice-President of Global Relations for USC/16-17/035 and USC/16-17/036; Ms Fedelma McNamara, TEP, for item USC/16-17/036; etc

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**USC/16-17/033 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2017 were approved.

**USC/16-17/034 Matters arising**

**USC/16-17/023** The link to the repository for information on the role of External Examiners had been sent to USC members.

[https://www.tcd.ie/undergraduate-studies/external-examiners/Role\\_EE\\_byschool.php](https://www.tcd.ie/undergraduate-studies/external-examiners/Role_EE_byschool.php)

**USC/16-17/031** The cessation of the Comparative Biology programme within TR071 was approved by Council at its meeting of 8 February 2017.

**USC/16-17/035 International Student Recruitment Strategy**

A report on the midterm review of the Global Relations Strategy for non-EU student recruitment was circulated. The Vice-President of Global Relations and Mr Declan Coogan, International Student Recruitment Officer, were welcomed to the meeting for this item. The International Student Recruitment Officer gave a presentation to the meeting.

He noted Trinity's objective was for 18% of the student body to be comprised of non-EU students by 2018/19. This would represent approximately 3,000 students. The target of having 2024 non-EU registered students in 2016 had been met; this represented a 66% increase from 2012.

Research in prioritising markets in terms of their potential for growth in student number had been carried out and resulted in the identification of three tiers of markets. The priority markets, tier 1, comprised the US, China and India. The US represents the largest source of international students registered in Irish universities. Investment in staff resources allowed the recruitment of Country Advisors on the ground in these markets. Tier 2 markets were the next highest priority and included Hong Kong, Russia, Turkey and South Korea. Increased activity on the ground included recruitment visits and attendance at education fairs. Tier 3 markets were seen to have potential for growth in the mid to long term and involved a cautious use of resources with a particular reliance on engagement with local education agents.

A geographical breakdown of the origin of non-EU students in Trinity from 2012-2016 was shown. A total of 122 countries were represented in the student body at Trinity in 2016. The number of students from the US had risen, however, due to the increase in growth from India and China, the percentage of students from the US had decreased.

The international student recruitment strategy in Trinity differs from other universities by focusing on the undergraduate market. The strategy involves relationship building with schools, engagement with education agents, digital and local social media campaigns, engagement with international sponsorship bodies, university partnerships, attendance at education fairs, Trinity's website, and reliance on a CRM system to ensure contact is made swiftly with eligible applicants. He noted that some regions favour building 5-year partnerships whereby the students will enter via Trinity's International Foundation Programme.

The International Student Recruitment Officer brought the committee through the strengths, opportunities and challenges of growing student numbers in the US, China, India and the Gulf States. Factors that could affect the intake from all regions included internal processes, accommodation constraints, government policies, and geopolitical forces. The trends in recruitment compared to last year were highlighted and a 24% increase in overall applications was noted.

The high expectations of students from many international markets were discussed and members wondered how best to ensure these expectations were met. It was noted that the satisfaction of international students was reported in the International Student Barometer and other surveys and that maintaining Trinity's reputation was vital.

Managing expectations by regular communication with applicants was seen as vital and certain key 'touch points' for when to contact applicants had been identified.

A member noted that individual Schools and Departments were not in control of the number of non-EU students taking their programmes. She wondered whether providing a financial incentive to Schools with high intakes of non-EU students would allow for more control over the satisfaction of the student experience. In response, the International Student Recruitment Officer advised that undergraduate courses did not have a quota of non-EU students but rather a target number. He noted the need to be strategic with resources and indicated that Global Officers were the main mechanism for engagement.

A member queried whether the markets of Japan, Indonesia and Iran had been targeted and explained why he felt these had great potential for student numbers. In response it was noted that engagement was ongoing in Japan while there was no real evidence to suggest Indonesia and Iran were favourable markets at the moment.

The importance of making timely offers to international applicants was highlighted and a member noted that high-calibre students might receive a number of offers and would usually accept the offer received first. It was noted that the Global Relations Office and Academic Registry were working to ensure that offers were made on a timely basis and that KPIs were in place in this regard. It was noted that two temporary posts to assist with applications had recently been filled in the Academic Registry.

#### **USC/16-17/036 Trinity Education Project**

##### **a) Internships and Student Mobility**

A document, Strand 2: Internships and Student Mobility – Discussion Document: Interim Report, and presentation were circulated for this item. Ms Fedelma McNamara, TEP, was welcomed to the meeting for this item.

To be continued....

##### **b) General Update and c) Academic Year Structure**

To follow....

#### **USC/16-17/037 Student Partnership Agreement**

The proposed agreement was circulated together with a memorandum from the Education Officer, TCDSU. The Education Officer spoke to the item.

The purpose of the Partnership Agreement was to “present the work being done to improve the student experience in partnership between Trinity College Dublin Students’ Unions (TCDSU and GSU) and Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, and to show students how they can get involved in that activity.” The agreement was intended to alleviate students’ concerns that their opinions were unvalued and to facilitate collaboration in supporting an inclusive and equal environment for all members of the College community. The agreement would complement strategic documents and provide information on agreed areas for partnership enhancement. The importance of an engaged student body had been recently highlighted in the HEA report, ‘Enhancing Student Engagement in Decision-Making’ (2016).

The agreement had been briefly discussed by the Student Life Committee earlier that day and would return to that group for approval at its next meeting. Part A, Section B and Section C are 'live' documents that would require review on an annual basis by the Project

Sponsor and Student Champions. Section B represents the first draft of the theme for implementation of the policy for the academic year 2017-18. Section C should be seen as the scope that exists for partnership and engagement in the University, rather than an exhaustive list of partnerships, and highlights areas in different aspects of college for students to work as partners with staff.

Members congratulated the Education Officer on the document and were supportive of promoting student engagement in College. Members commended Part A and felt that Section B was implementable. Members raised concerns that elements of Section C provided regulatory information and advised that these elements should be removed. A member noted that she had been in touch with the Vice-Provost on the agreement and that he similarly approved of the spirit of the agreement but could not stand over the specific operational and regulatory issues it outlined. Members agreed that Section C should be reframed more clearly as a scoping document and should remove references to committees being responsible for monitoring issues. It was agreed that the examples of types of engagement were useful and should be retained. It was noted that the policy could be approved as a first step while issues in other sections could be worked out in the implementation phases.

The Education Officer would revise the documents in line with feedback received and would subsequently resubmit the documents to the Student Life Committee and USC. He noted that approval was sought in particular for the initial pages of the document (pages 2-5) as this is the long-standing policy. Sections A, B and C are supporting documentation to compliment the agreed policy.

#### **USC/16-17/038 Course Proposals**

##### **a) Bachelor in Stage Management and Technical Theatre**

A proposal from the School of Creative Arts, in association with The Lir Academy, to restructure the existing Professional Diploma in Stage Management and Technical Theatre to lead to the Bachelor in Stage Management and Technical Theatre had been circulated. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed Loughlin Deegan, Director of The Lir, and Barry Conway, Course Director, The Lir, to the meeting for this item.

The current level 8 Professional Diploma in Stage Management and Technical Theatre has been offered by The Lir Academy since 2012 and is aimed at students with a level 6 or 7 qualification or with sufficient professional experience. Repositioning the course to a level 8 Bachelor's degree course would make the course more beneficial to applicants and ensure the continuing eligibility of students for the free fees scheme.

The proposal for a three-year programme aligns with similar programmes offered at comparable international drama schools including the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) who are currently realigning their two-year diploma to a three-year degree course. The course would follow the structure of the Bachelor in Acting and leading acting degree courses in other institutions by operating over 36 weeks. The course would comprise 240 ECTS credits and be delivered by The Lir Academy.

The course aims to furnish talented students with the skills required for a career in professional theatre and related industries. The course will provide students the flexibility to develop a deep level of general knowledge or to focus on a particular specialism depending on their module choices. The third year of the course would involve both a research project and an industry placement.

The Senior Tutor sought assurance that given the non-standard structure of the course, the students would have full access to the tutorial system and the appeals process. The

Director of Student Services advised that the Academic Registry has a reduced staff complement in the summer months. The presenters noted that they were mindful of these issues and that students would be advised to prioritise seeking access to services in the first two terms where possible. They noted that the similarly structured Bachelor of Acting had not encountered difficulties of this nature.

In response to a query, the presenters confirmed that the non-EU intake would not be confined to two students but that the total student number would be capped at 18 due to resource constraints.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted the focus on graduate attributes throughout the document but suggested that these be made more explicit at the beginning of the proposal.

USC recommended the course for external review, in advance of consideration by Council.

b) **Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

A proposal for a Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship from the Trinity Innovation Academy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub, had been circulated. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed Dr. Daniel Rogers, Programme Development Manager, Innovation Academy, and Professor Tim Savage, Associate Dean On-line Education, to the meeting for this item.

The Programme Development Manager introduced the course as a level 7 special purpose award comprising 10 ECTS credits that would be made available to all Trinity students engaged in an undergraduate degree course. The course would be led by the Trinity Innovation Academy with academic oversight under negotiation with the Trinity Business School. The course delivery method would be blended with 70% delivered online and 30% delivered in the classroom. The course involves two core modules carrying 5 ECTS credits each and could be taken part-time over one year, or part-time over two years. Each module would be assessed by continuous assessment and project assignments and be graded on a pass/fail basis. The course would be a co-curricular learning opportunity with specific emphasis on innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to problem solving and would allow students to develop transferable skills seen as essential to entrepreneurship.

A number of members noted that the proposed learning outcomes align closely with the Trinity graduate attributes and questioned whether the course could be reframed to allow Trinity students to take it as either a Trinity elective or approved module. Some members raised concerns about the extra workload the course would involve for students and noted that providing the course as a component of a student's main course would alleviate this issue. In response, the presenters highlighted that a complementary qualification would enhance job opportunities for students and advised that students had been surveyed and approximately 60% had shown interest in taking the course. Entry to the course would be via self selection and subject to students demonstrating that they have the capacity to undertake the workload involved.

Members made a number of other suggestions regarding the format of the course including offering the course outside of Trinity (possibly by means of a MOOC); allowing students to take 5 credits to enhance learning without certification; offering the course intensively over one or two weeks; offering the course to new graduates. It was noted that a fee would be charged for the course if it was taken outside of a student's core programme, but taking it as an elective would not have a cost implication for the student.

The presenters agreed to consider the committee's suggestions with regard to the alternative formats for the course, in particular, the option of offering the course as part of

a student's core course. It was noted, however, that the proposed start date for the course was September 2017 which was well in advance of the date when Trinity electives would be available. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that she would bring the course proposal to the Strand 4 Electives Working Group for discussion.

The committee agreed that the target audience of the course was an operational matter that should be looked at separately and recommended that the course be sent for external review prior to consideration by Council.

**c) TCD-Columbia Dual Degree Programme Pilot,**

A proposal for a dual degree pilot programme from the Centre for European Studies had been circulated. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies welcomed Professor Graeme Murdock, Centre for European Studies, to speak to this item.

In 2016 Council had approved a proposal regarding the structure of a dual award with Columbia (CL/16-17/035) and also the design of a pilot dual programme in European Studies for student intakes in 2017/18 and 2018/19. The pilot programme would be available to students in the Senior Freshman year of the European Studies course in Trinity and would require students to complete an intensive programme of study at an approved European university in the summer following the Senior Freshman year. Successful applicants would complete the final two years of their undergraduate study in Columbia. Progression from the third to fourth year would be governed by Columbia's regulations and students would continue to be registered at Trinity throughout the programme. The proposed programme has a credit load of 300 ECTS and would lead to the award of two Bachelor degrees; one from Trinity and one from Columbia University. Extensive consultation had taken place with staff and students in Trinity where there was a lot of enthusiasm for the pilot programme.

Students at Columbia must complete the 'Columbia core' which requires study of a diverse group of subjects. Much of the core programme will be met by elements of the Freshman programme in Trinity and the remaining elements must be taken in a student's final two years at Columbia. In addition, students must nominate a 'major' area of study. In consultation with colleagues at Columbia, a detailed curriculum mapping exercise had been carried out to facilitate students meeting the academic requirements.

The proposer noted that students would be eligible to apply for financial aid packages from Columbia and that the University of Dublin Fund US had offered to fund two scholarships of \$14,000 each for both years of the pilot programme.

In response to a concern regarding the demands of the summer study and internship arrangements, specifically, that students would not have any summer break, the proposer emphasised that the structure of the programme had already been approved by Council and noted that this issue had been considered in the consultation period. A member raised a concern that due to the high cost of student fees and the living costs associated with the programme, it would only be available to students in the top socio-economic group.

In response to a question, the proposer noted that while the structure of the programme involving two years of study at Trinity followed by two years at Columbia was largely set due to regulatory issues in Columbia, it was also advantageous for Trinity and would facilitate efficient management of the programme. Some further discussion took place that mostly related to the full degree programme rather than the pilot programme.

USC recommended the submission of the pilot programme proposal to Council.

**USC/16-17/039 Policy on Programme Cessation and Suspension**

The proposed policy was circulated with a memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 16 February 2017. This item was deferred due to a lack of time.

**USC/16-17/040 Any Other Business**

**USC/16-17/026** The Director of Student Services updated the committee on a concern that had been raised at the meeting on 15 November 2016 regarding delays in student registration. She advised that a preliminary review of registration had identified a number of issues for review and advised that the review will not focus on garda vetting as previously discussed but rather would take a holistic view of registration. A project sponsor and project manager had been identified. A cross-functional registration team had been identified and piloted for the January 2017 intake. The Director will continue to update USC as the project progresses.

**USC/16-17/041 Minutes**

USC noted the following minutes:

1. **Royal Irish Academy of Music Associated College Degrees Committee,**  
Minutes of 16 November 2016
2. **Marino Institute of Education Associated College Degrees Committee,**  
Minutes of 30 November 2016

**USC/16-17/042 Items for Noting**

USC noted the following:

**Admission and Transfer Policy**