



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 30 May 2017 at 11 am in the Henry Jones Room.

Present: Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer, Professor Gillian Martin (*Chair*)
 Academic Secretary, Ms Patricia Callaghan
 Senior Tutor, Professor Aidan Seery
 Professor David Prendergast, School of Law
 Professor Louis Brennan, School of Business
 Professor Pauline Sloane, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
 Professor Charles Patterson, School of Physics
 Professor Mike Brady, School of Computer Science and Statistics
 Professor Derek Sullivan, School of Dental Science
 Professor Brian Brewer, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
 Professor Eric Weitz, School of Creative Arts
 Professor Mark Hennessy, School of Natural Sciences
 Professor Kevin Mitchell, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Science Education
 Professor Kevin Conlon, School of Medicine
 Professor Peter Cherry, School of Histories and Humanities
 Professor Frank Wellmer, School of Genetics and Microbiology
 Professor Michael Bridge, School of Chemistry
 Professor Sarah Smyth, Director of TSM
 Professor Elaine Moriarty, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
 Professor John Walsh, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
 Mr Dale Whelehan, Education Officer, Students' Union

Apologies: Professor Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
 Dean of Students, Professor Kevin O'Kelly
 Professor Robbie Gilligan, School of Social Work and Social Policy
 Professor Elizabeth Nixon, School of Psychology
 Professor Cathriona Russell, School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology
 Professor Paschalis Karageorgis, School of Mathematics
 Professor Jarlath Killeen, School of English
 Professor Alan O'Connor, School of Engineering
 Professor Keith Johnston, School of Education
 Professor Imelda Coyne, School of Nursing and Midwifery
 Mr Colm O'Halloran, Student Representative

In attendance: Ms Elaine Egan; Dr Alison Oldam, Director of Student Services; Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and Professor David Ditchburn, Department of History, for USC/16-17/073; Professor Patrick Geoghegan, Department of History, for USC/16-17/074

USC/16-17/073 Trinity/Columbia Dual Degree Programme proposals

XX

Proposals for a dual B.A. programme with Columbia University in History and for a dual B.A. programme with Columbia University in English Studies were circulated. Professor David Ditchburn, Department of History, and the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences attended for this item.

History

Professor David Ditchburn introduced the History proposal to USC. The programme followed the structure of a dual award with Columbia University that had been approved by Council (CL/16-17/035) and therefore had a similar structure to the two dual degree programmes that had been approved at the previous meeting of USC. The programme would involve the first two years of study in Trinity, and the final two years in Columbia University.

The Trinity modules had a credit volume of 60 ECTS and included an intensive study topic, approved summer school, an internship, a general paper, and the capstone project. The project would be jointly supervised by both universities and lead to two outputs: a dissertation for Columbia and an extended appraisal of the primary sources used for the project for Trinity. In order to satisfy the Columbia core requirements, non-history subjects would be taken in the first two years, comprising 10 ECTS credits in the first year and 20 ECTS credits in the second year. These subjects include languages, politics or economics, or science. In response to a query regarding the general paper, Professor Ditchburn, advised that a reading list would be provided to students and they would be encouraged to make use of knowledge from previous modules.

Professor Ditchburn referred to the small number of students on the course and noted how the EU/non-EU balance would be different to the usual balance in Trinity. It was envisaged that there would be a fairly equal split between students from the US and other non-EU areas. He confirmed there was no minimum requirement to run the course as there was no requirement for extra modules in the first two years. In response to queries regarding the internship, he confirmed that students could request approval for an internship which they had sourced themselves and that support for sourcing internships would be provided in both Trinity and Columbia. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer requested that links between the internship and other elements of the curriculum and the graduate attributes be made explicit in the proposal; along the same lines as in the English Studies Dual Degree Programme proposal.

In response to a query, Professor Ditchburn confirmed that a number of financial aid packages would be available from Columbia in the form of studentships and bursaries and that students may be required to pay additional fees for the summer school element of the programme. A member noted that the 300 ECTS credit volume for the course could be seen as compacting five years of work into four years. Professor Ditchburn advised that the workload had been spread out across the years and work would continue over the summer vacation period.

A discussion took place regarding entry to the programme and it was confirmed that the course did not have a separate CAO entry code to the standard Single Honors History course. Following application to the CAO, EU applicants would be contacted to ascertain their interest in the programme. Eligible applicants would then be invited for interview. A member raised a concern about students entering one programme and exiting with a different award. The proposers confirmed that they had been advised that the dual degree structure was the most appropriate for the programme. They noted that the marketing of the course would be a joint effort between Global Relations, Trinity, and Columbia. The Dean of AHSS referred to the demand for places on the two existing dual award programmes in Columbia and envisaged a similar level of demand for this programme.

It was confirmed that a mechanism was built into the course that would allow students, in certain circumstances, to join the single-honors programme in Trinity following the Junior Sophister year. It was envisaged that students would consider themselves students of both universities and this had been borne out in meetings with students on the other dual

degree programmes in Columbia. Connection with Trinity in the final two years would be encouraged via the Trinity advisor who would remain in touch with students for the duration of the programme and the joint supervision of the capstone project. The proposers would confirm to members at a later date whether there would be a joint transcript or separate transcripts from Columbia and Trinity.

English Studies

The Dean of AHSS presented the proposal for a dual B.A. programme with Columbia University in English Studies. He noted that staff in the School of English were attending an external examiners meeting and were therefore unavailable to present the proposal to USC. He noted that the structure of the programme was the same as the Council-approved structure and the three other proposals for dual awards with Columbia.

The additional 60 credits in the Trinity modules involved an open archives project, a general paper drawing on the work of the SF and JS years; an intensive two-week module, the nature of which would vary from year to year; and a jointly supervised capstone project involving two outputs: completion of a dissertation for Columbia and a separate piece of writing on this work and research for Trinity. Language courses would be available to ensure the language requirements of the Columbia core would be met.

The Director of Student Services acknowledged the cumulative impact on student services of introducing a number of new small courses and noted there had not been a corresponding increase in resources. The Dean responded that the dual degree programmes were among those that would generate substantial income for Trinity and should therefore have a positive impact towards improving services in general.

Accommodation for students in the final two years of the dual degree programmes would be set aside in Columbia University accommodation. A member cautioned that the student accommodation is in a vast and diverse area and advised the proposers to carefully monitor the situation. During the first two years, the students would have the same opportunities as other students for taking up accommodation in Dublin.

In response to a question, the proposers recognised that the workload for staff on the programme would be included in Schools' workload models, being cognizant that staff would require sufficient time for research.

The proposers withdrew from the meeting and members continued discussion of the programmes. In response to a query, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer clarified that Council had approved the extra 60 credits on the basis of the extra workload required to achieve a dual award. Members were satisfied with the academic robustness of the programme, but raised some concerns regarding the structure and felt that it required careful monitoring. Some members raised a concern about parity of treatment and parity of esteem for the students on the dual degree programmes. A member felt that the high cost of the programme would be prohibitive for many students. A member noted that further clarification on the framework of the entry and exit to the programme, and on the transcript, should be provided in the documentation that would proceed to Council.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies/Senior Lecturer clarified the entry and selection process further, noting that students would have confirmed their choice for entry onto the dual degree programmes and undergone a robust selection process prior to their starting the programme. She also confirmed that places on the dual degree programmes were additional to the existing quota. Discussion took place around the different form the capstone project would take for students on these programmes compared to students on other Trinity programmes. It was noted that there were no students on the pilot programme in European Studies in 17/18 which meant there would not be an opportunity

to act upon feedback from the pilot.

The proposers re-joined the meeting and were advised that USC approved the two proposed programmes to proceed to external review and subsequently to Council, subject to a thorough review of operational and academic matters being carried out in five years. A similar review should also be carried out on the Dual Degree programmes in European Studies and in Middle Eastern and European Languages and Cultures. A detailed framework, which includes items such as entry and exit to the programme, and the transcript, should be provided in the documentation that would proceed to Council.

USC/16-17/074 CAVE Report on the Trinity Admissions Feasibility Study

XX

A report on the Trinity Admissions Feasibility Study by the Cultures, Academic Values and Education (CAVE) Research Centre, together with a memorandum from Professor Patrick Geoghegan, Project Sponsor of the Trinity Admissions Feasibility Study, dated 18 May 2017 was circulated. Approval was being sought from USC to continue the study, in its current format, for another year. The three courses involved had expressed their interest in continuing. Professor Geoghegan reported that the Vice-Provost wished to discuss the study and report with the Department of Education and Skills over the next few months.

Professor Geoghegan extended his thanks to Professor Minton and Dr McDaid from CAVE for the report. The report indicated that the feasibility study had worked well and that students that entered Trinity via the study were content on their programmes and performing satisfactorily. The main issue highlighted in the report was the lack of awareness of the study among prospective candidates. Professor Geoghegan noted that this was despite guidance counsellors and principals having been contacted and information packs sent to all secondary schools. It was thought that the relatively small numbers of places on the study was somewhat responsible for the low level of public awareness. The report suggested that consideration should be given to changing the name of the study to make it more attractive to potential students. A member recommended contacting school principals in the first instance, rather than guidance counsellors, as they would be best placed to disseminate the information. It was noted that guidance counsellors had engaged with the study in varying degrees.

The Director of Student Services raised a concern with the suggestion in the memorandum that ‘the budget and administration of the study should be incorporated into the general admissions area so that it can be marketed as part of an integrated strategy rather than being out on its own’. She queried whether this had been discussed with the Academic Registry and noted that if the study was moved to an area, that area would require an appropriate budget and resources. Professor Geoghegan and the Director of Student Services engaged in a discussion about the workload involved in managing admissions and marketing for the study and further information on the existing workload for managing admission would be sought from the Academic Registry. The Director suggested that this element of the proposal could not be approved without full consultation with the Academic Registry. Professor Geoghegan highlighted the need for the study to be further integrated in College to ensure that it would be included in general marketing activity.

Professor Geoghegan provided some background information on the study noting that in the first and second years a personal statement was scored and considered alongside a student’s relative performance rank (RPR) – which relates to the performance of an applicant relative to other students from their school sitting the Leaving Certificate – and points achieved in the Leaving Certificate. It was subsequently found that marking the personal statement had been labour-intensive and without significant value as most students achieved marks in the mid-range. It had therefore been decided that the personal statement would be used as a qualifier to help show an applicant’s suitability for the course, but it would not be one of the scoring pillars: Entry to the study is now based

solely on Leaving Certificate points and RPR.

Professor Geoghegan noted that many of the students admitted to Law via the study had achieved points just slightly below the course entry points. Members queried the aims of the programme and Professor Geoghegan advised they included to recognise ability and potential in students who otherwise may not be afforded the chance, to attract students from schools that do not usually attend Trinity, and to possibly help inform the development of national policy. It was noted in the discussion that some of the students on the History course and the Ancient Medieval History and Culture course had achieved points significantly lower than the minimum entry points, that the study attracted students from a wider geographical area than usual, and that approximately 75 students had entered Trinity via the feasibility study route.

Professor Geoghegan noted that it was too early in the process to test the overall impact of the study but this would happen further down the line. He advised that the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer had suggested exploring the inclusion of a science course on a similar scale to the existing courses. It was acknowledged that decisions would need to be made about the long-term status of the study and that further testing would need to be done if it were decided to significantly increase its scope. It was also acknowledged that the budget should be confirmed and that the attractiveness of the study could be enhanced if ex-quota places were made available.

USC approved the continuation of the study in its current shape, with the specification that a full review be carried out in the following year, when the first cohort of students would have completed a full academic cycle. In advance of this, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies requested that a document elaborating the aims of the study be brought to the first meeting of USC in 17/18. Professor Geoghegan noted he would step down as project sponsor before the 2017/18 academic year as the role would be better served by a College Officer.

USC/16-17/075 Calendar Changes 2017/18

XX

Changes for the 2017/18 University Calendar with respect to the General Regulations section, the Foundation Scholarship section, course entries in the three faculties and the Two-Subject Moderatorship, and the validated courses section had been circulated.

A member noted that a change may be required to the European Studies programme entry to reflect changes in structural arrangements between schools. This had been discussed by the relevant departments. Changes to the Bachelor in Social Studies programme would also be forthcoming, although it was established that follow-up with the relevant departments would first be required. The DUTL in the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy would liaise on this with Trinity Teaching and Learning.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies drew members' attention to changes in the General Regulations section in relation to plagiarism. She reminded the committee of the recommendations that had been made by the plagiarism working group in 2014-15 and noted that the group had recently met to review how these had been working. Arising from that, a recommendation was made with relation to Level 3 plagiarism, which currently does not permit resubmission, proposing that students would be required to submit a new piece of work as a supplemental assessment during the next available session and the assessment mark and the overall module mark would be capped at the pass mark. Where no opportunity for a supplemental assessment was available, discretion would lie with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies. A change had also been made with the effect that when the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies is requested to approve a penalty that had been recommended in the case of a Level 2 or

3 offence, they could now vary the penalty alongside the previous options of approving or rejecting it.

In response to a question on whether the initial plagiarism recommendations had been successfully implemented, the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that they increased the visibility of plagiarism cases and that more cases of plagiarism had been forwarded to her, but that in some cases the level of plagiarism had not been recorded at the module level in SITS. The issue of module lecturers not being able to record the level of plagiarism in SITS was raised. Also, reports could be accessed only by College Tutors, the Senior Tutor, the Deans of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies, and progression managers. It was clarified that plagiarism is recorded in SITS after the summary procedure had taken place and the recommendation approved by the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies as appropriate. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that some of the wording on the matrix would be clarified. She noted that consideration had been given to purchasing an external software tutorial on plagiarism but that following feedback from a small-scale trial of the product by some students and staff members, a decision had been taken not to proceed. She noted that the existing Ready, Steady, Write tutorial would continue to be used. A member advised that Blackboard and Turnitin had been linked and that Blackboard had also been linked to SITS.

Ms Elaine Egan, Trinity Teaching and Learning, advised that this was the first year that the validated courses section had been submitted to USC and that it would be brought to the committee each year going forward. She noted that she would follow up with some courses in relation to entries that referred to minimum points on the old Leaving Certificate scale. Finally she noted that the terms 'Freshman' and 'Freshmen' would no longer be used and students would now be referred to as Junior and Senior Fresh Students and/or Freshers.

The Director of TSM advised that she would contact Ms Egan with regards to some minor editorial corrections required in the TSM section.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies noted that not all courses provided specific details relating to the piece of independent work that was to be undertaken in one of the final two years. Where details were not provided, a statement of the requirement should be included in either the course or faculty regulations.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies clarified a couple of issues with the DUTL from the School of Computer Science and Statistics, including the Senior Sophister entry for Computer Science and Business degree and the change in the threshold mark from 50% to 60% in the third year examinations in order to progress to the fourth year of the Masters in Computer Science. The change to 60% for the master's track had arisen following a review of the students who had completed the course which had indicated that a 60% threshold would be more appropriate.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that clarification had been sought with regard to reassessment of placements on the Occupational Therapy programme and it was proposed that the Calendar entry be reworded.

The Foundation Scholarship section had been amended to reflect the Council and Board approved decision that 'seen' papers would not be allowed in the Scholarship examinations.

Calendar changes were approved, taking into account the comments made during the meeting.

USC/16-17/076 CAO Admissions data 2017/18

CAO Admissions data for 2017/18 was circulated together with a memorandum from the Admissions Officer and the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies, dated 28 March 2017. The data had previously been discussed at Council. The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies highlighted the increase in the number of first preferences and referred to supplementary data which indicated that Trinity received the highest number of first preferences per place and the highest number of applications per place in relation to the other universities.

USC/16-17/077 Proposed change to Admission Requirements for 2019 Entry**XX**

A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Admissions Officer, dated 29 May 2017, had been circulated, which outlined a proposed change in relation to the Chemistry requirement from the School of Pharmacy. The DUTL in the School of Pharmacy explained that the school was proposing a change to the specific programme requirements for the undergraduate degree programme in Pharmacy. The proposal would involve a change from a requirement for a H5 in chemistry to a H4 in chemistry or physics/chemistry and the inclusion of a note that physics may not be presented with physics/chemistry. The increase to H4 in chemistry would bring the requirement in line with other Pharmacy courses and the inclusion of physics/chemistry as an acceptable subject would extend the pool of applicants for the programme. The change would apply for entrants in 2019. USC approved the proposed change in requirements.

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies advised that the exercise of mapping specific minimum subject requirements from the old Leaving Certificate grading scale to the new scale was undertaken on the basis of percentage bands. This meant that programmes with a minimum mathematics requirement of an OC3/HD3 were mapped to a H6/O4. The State Examinations Commission had noted its intention to ensure that the new grading system establishes equivalence between the O1 and H5, O2 and H6, and O3 and H7 grades. In light of this, she advised members that a discussion would need to take place around the mathematics requirement and programmes would be contacted about this with a view to discussing the matter further at USC in the next academic year. Upward revision of minimum subject entry requirements requires two years' notice.

USC/16-17/078 Any other business

- A review of gold medal awards would be carried out in the next academic year.

- The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies thanked members for their hard work during the academic year, in particular those members that were retiring from the committee.