

SOAS  
**Faculty of Law and Social Sciences**  
**FACULTY BOARD**

Thursday 11 May 2006

**MINUTES**

Prof Bob Ash *	Dr Sudipta Kaviraj
Prof Henry Bernstein	Dr Jens Lerche
Dr Hong Bo	Ms Lara De Marco
Professor Stephen Chan (Chair)	Prof Michael Palmer
Dr Matthew Craven	Ms Sonja Ruehl
Professor Ben Fine *	Dr Lynn Welchman
Dr Jane Harrigan *	Evita Rackow (Student Rep) *
Prof Laurence Harris	Indira Campos (Student Rep) **
Dr Stephen Hopgood *	

In attendance: Mrs Carolyn Heath (Secretary)  
Mrs Barbara Spina

Those members whose names are marked with an asterisk were unable to be present: (\*) gave apologies, (\*\*) were absent.

**49 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

- 49.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2006 were APPROVED with the following amendment:
- AUT Strike (Minute 40.1.2 refers) – minute changed as follows: “It was NOTED that the strike action is opposed by the school as *it is the school’s opinion that* tuition fees will not generate sufficient funds to review salaries immediately.”

**50 MATTERS ARISING**

- 50.1 Common Spine Negotiations (Minute 28.2 refers)  
It was NOTED that the ACAS talks are currently still on hold, but are expected to progress in due course, with common spine talks following.
- 50.2 21/22 Russell Square (Minute 40.3 refers)  
It was NOTED that the purchase of 21/22 Russell Square is now completed, but that the building is now occupied by squatters. It is therefore unlikely to be available for use until the end of 2006/7.

**51 DEAN’S REPORT**

- 51.1 Budgets for 2006/7  
It was NOTED that the Deans have been pressing for approval of a deficit budget due to their being unable to meet the Governors request for a balanced budget. The Deans have also requested the introduction of a longer term, academically and managerially based planning structure.

- 51.2 QAA Institutional Audit  
It was NOTED that it is expected that SOAS will be subject to a QAA Institutional Audit during 2006/7 (term 2). Further details will be circulated when available.
- 51.3 RAE  
51.3.1 It was NOTED that Research Policy Committee recently agreed the school's Code of Practice for the RAE, and that this will be circulated to all staff imminently.
- 51.3.2 It was also NOTED that each member of staff in the faculty will be asked to complete an exercise of self-assessment regarding their submitted publications – all research-active academic staff will be asked to identify their best returns, not as a definitive statement but to provide an initial indicative view to the Dean and Associate Dean.
- 51.4 New Director  
51.4.1 It was NOTED that the new Director will be starting on 1 August. It was also NOTED that he will be attending an away day with Library staff, and that he has been paying attention during his visits to meeting young/new members of academic staff who are not office holders.
- 51.4.2 It was also NOTED that the new Director has stated that he will continue with the existing structure of the school.

## **52 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING PG)**

- 52.1 Double-marking of exam scripts, coursework and dissertations  
52.1.1 The paper from Registry was NOTED as approved school policy (agreed at previous Learning and Teaching Policy committee).
- 52.1.2 It was NOTED that some staff withheld comment to this item due to the AUT action.
- 52.2 Procedure for marking exam scripts  
52.2.1 The separate comments sheet recommended by FLTC was considered – it was NOTED that this was to ensure that comments by markers can remain confidential from students.
- 52.2.2 It was NOTED that comments are not required for every script, and that therefore the sheets were not pre-printed with candidate numbers to avoid that suggestion.
- 52.2.3 It was requested from Development Studies that the boxes were reduced in size so as not to suggest that markers needed to provide lengthy comments on each question.
- 52.2.4 It was NOTED that full discussion could only be fruitful after the next meeting due to the AUT action. It was therefore agreed that the amended sheet (which had been copied and made available to academic staff) continue to be made available to staff who wish to use it.

52.3 MA/MSc marking scheme

52.3.1 The proposal from Registry suggesting amendments to the MA/MSc marking scheme was NOTED and welcomed. FLTC had raised concerns with the criteria for distinction as follows (text from email to Registry on 10 May):

“The key concern is that the principle of using an average of course marks for distinctions will disadvantage students - this is because there is not a linear usage of grades at the high end of the marking scale: marks above 70% are awarded differently from marks below 70 - it is extremely rare for any mark above 73-74% to be awarded at all. Any mark above 70% is deemed to be excellent, whereas the full range of marks between 60-69% is used. For this reason, averaging course marks across these two scales will almost always lead to an average which falls below 70% - even if half of the marks are themselves 70% or above.

For this reason, the Faculty would want to revert to the previous principle - that the criterion for awarding a distinction is based on the number of units marked at 70% or above. However, this does mean that it is not possible to have one standard/universal statement which can be applied to all degrees. There will need to continue to be two different regulations: for programmes with 10 units and for programmes with 4 units. Our suggestions for these are as follows:

(a) Award of a Masters Degree with Distinction (for 4 unit degrees) (i.e everything except Economics and DeFiMS)

At least two elements with marks of 70% or above, including the dissertation, and no mark below 60%. For the purposes of the award of Merit or Distinction, half courses/elements may be added together and averaged.

(b) Award of a Masters Degree with Distinction (for 10 element degrees) (i.e Economics and DeFiMS)

A mark of 70% or above in the dissertation and at least three other marks of 70% or above, and no mark below 60%.

The latter of these represents 'no change' from the criteria used previously. The change to the former is to remove the current disadvantage shown to students who take 2 x half units in place of 1 x full unit. Since assessment is averaged within full units, it is reasonable to average the 2 half units where taken in place of 1 full unit. This is consistent with averaging across all 4 or 10 elements - but allows consistency between students whether they choose half or full units.”

This was APPROVED by Faculty Board to be forwarded to L&TPC. It was hoped that these comments could be included in the proposal to be approved for implementation from 2006/7.

52.3.2 It was also NOTED that there was uncertainty about the final paragraph of the proposal in which it is stated that “all marks could be published after the first relevant board meeting without hindering the ability of the board to make a decision on the overall profile” – at the meeting it was thought that this referred to releasing provisional marks, but was afterwards confirmed to refer to issuing year 1 marks for part-time students.

52.4 Leave of Absence statement

It was AGREED that the proposed statement from Registry be recommended to L&TPC omitting the shaded paragraph which it was felt to be inappropriate.

**53 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING UG)**

53.1 Time Limits for completion of UG Degrees

It was AGREED that the proposed regulations from Registry be recommended to L&TPC.

**54 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH)**

54.1 Library Opening Hours

54.1.1 It was NOTED that research students are concerned that the school’s response to requests for increased opening hours reflects the needs of UG and PGT students but not those of research students. They have therefore requested via Faculty Research Committee that the Library’s hours are extended throughout the year, including during vacations.

54.1.2 It was NOTED that the current increased hours are a pilot project and that it is hoped that opening hours will be increased permanently in the near future.

54.2 Supervision Training

54.2.1 It was NOTED that the three faculties Associate Deans are liaising with the Learning & Teaching Unit to devise training for staff who are new to MPhil / PhD supervision. This would include the identification of a mentor within the department for support re this role. After completing the training and gaining experience, staff would be eligible for lead supervision. The joint proposal will be considered by Faculty Board once it is compiled.

This was welcomed in principle by Faculty Board.

54.2.2 It was also REQUESTED that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> supervision be taken into account when considering workloads. It was NOTED that progress on a school-wide workload model is expected under the new Director.

54.3 Fundraising

It was NOTED by the Faculty Research Committee that the availability of scholarships for L&SS students is minimal. It was AGREED that external funding be considered in liaison with Pamela Barrett.

54.4 Research Allocations

It was NOTED that the Faculty Research Committee had requested that un-spent internal research allocations be available for PhD students as writing-up funds. It was AGREED that the Faculty Administrator look into this for the next meeting.

54.5 MPhil Applications

It was NOTED that the Faculty Research Committee were concerned that some departments in the faculty have low numbers of applications and offers.

54.6 Research Leave

Concern was NOTED regarding the role of the Faculty Research Committee in the process of considering and approving research leave. It was NOTED that the process and entitlement is expected to be reviewed by the new Director.

**55 PROGRAMME PROPOSALS**

55.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following new PROGRAMMES had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:

- Diploma in Banking (DeFiMS – Distance Learning) (new)
- MBA Banking (DeFiMS – Distance Learning) (new)
- MSc Finance and Financial Law (DeFiMS – Distance Learning) (amendment to structure and syllabus)
- MSc International Management (China) (DeFiMS - Distance Learning) (amendment to structure and syllabus)

These programmes were AGREED to be recommended to Learning & Teaching Policy Committee for approval.

**56 COURSE PROPOSALS**

56.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following new COURSES had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:

- Marxist Political Economy and Global Development (Economics PG – as option for MSc Development Studies)
- Company Law (Law UG)
- Islam and Democracy (Politics UG) [It was NOTED that there was a considerable focus on Islamic Law issues, and agreed that Matt Nelson should discuss this with Lynn Welchman]
- Public Sector Financial Reporting and Audit PPM208 (DeFiMS Distance Learning)

It was CONFIRMED that the following Distance Learning courses COURSES had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows – it was NOTED that these have been running for several years but had not been presented through the formal procedure:

- FME103 Banking and Capital Markets
- FM 204 Risk Management: Principles and Applications
- FME205 Investment and Project Appraisal
- FME101 Macroeconomic Policy and Financial Markets

- FM202 Corporate Finance
- PPM104 Management Information and Information Systems
- PPM201 Decentralisation and Local Governance
- PPM203 Managing Organisational Change
- PPM204 Project Appraisal and Impact Analysis

These courses were APPROVED.

## **57 COURSE DELETIONS**

**57.1** It was CONFIRMED that the following COURSES are to be deleted:

- Economics of Development with reference to South Asia (15PECC002)

It was CONFIRMED that there will still be a South Asia economics course for MA students to take, that the deletion is to remove a duplicate course which is no longer necessary. This deletion was APPROVED

## **58 GEOGRAPHY COURSES 2006/7**

58.1 The list of Kings Geography courses available to Development Studies students was APPROVED – it was NOTED that MSc DS/VCD students would be able to select these courses as options without requiring special approval from the Associate Dean.

## **59 STUDENT ORIENTATION 2005**

59.1 Comments from the student survey undertaken during Induction week in September 2005 were NOTED.

## **60 CAREERS SERVICE**

60.1 Feedback from the meeting with L&SS Student Reps and the Careers Service were NOTED. It was AGREED that Careers should be invited to present their report next session.

## **61 STUDENT SERVICES**

61.1 Feedback from the meeting with L&SS Student Reps and Student Service were NOTED. It was AGREED that Student Services should be invited to present their report next session.

## **62 DEVELOPMENT STUDIES INTERNAL QAAC REVIEW**

62.1 The self evaluation statement submitted by the Development Studies department to the recent QAAC review was NOTED. Jens Lerche and colleagues were congratulated for the excellent review process and feedback.

**63 COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES 2006/7**

63.1 The representatives for faculty and school committees in 2006/7 were CONFIRMED.

It was AGREED that Lynn Welchman replace Michael Palmer as Governing Body representative, and that Peter Muchlinski be asked to be one of the faculty representatives on the new Information Strategy and Services Committee.

**64 HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AND ASSOCIATE DEANS 2006/7**

64.1 Heads of Department for 2006/7 were CONFIRMED as follows:  
Development Studies – Dr Ray Kiely (new) [subject to confirmation]  
DeFiMS – Prof Laurence Harris (continuing)  
Economics – Dr Jane Harrigan (continuing)  
Law – Dr Matthew Craven (continuing)  
Political and International Studies – tbc (new)

Associate Deans for 2006/7 were CONFIRMED as follows:  
Learning & Teaching (Undergraduate) – Prof Bob Ash (continuing)  
Learning & Teaching (Postgraduate) – Sonja Ruehl (continuing)  
Research – Prof Michael Palmer (continuing)

**65 RESEARCH LEAVE**

65.1 Variations to the previously agreed Research Leave were CONFIRMED. It was NOTED that Dr Deniz Kandiyoti's Leverhulme grant will cover her replacement teaching.

**66 ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS**

66.1 It was NOTED that the following staff have had their promotion to Senior Lecturer confirmed by the Schools Promotions Committee:

- Dr Luca DEIDDA (DeFiMS)
- Dr Jonathan GOODHAND (Development Studies)

They were congratulated by Faculty Board.

**67 GUIDELINES ON RENEWAL AND EXTENSION OF REGISTRATION (DISTANCE LEARNING)**

67.1 The guidelines were NOTED.

**68 GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL PROGRAMME BOARDS OF EXAMINERS (DISTANCE LEARNING)**

68.1 The guidelines were NOTED.

**69 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

69.1 Programme Proposal

It was NOTED that Development Studies are in the process of compiling a proposal for a new postgraduate programme – MA/MSc Globalisation and Development. This was given initial AGREEMENT so that the programme can be included in the 2007 entry prospectus (subject to approval).

69.2 Consequences of AUT action for students

It was NOTED that some students feel that they have been disadvantaged due to the strike action and lack of feedback from their essays. Faculty Board recognised these concerns and NOTED that it is the school's intention that students will not be disadvantaged by the national action.

69.3 Admissions

69.3.1 It was NOTED that there is currently a back-log of approximately 8 weeks in the Admissions Office, particularly affecting PG applications. It was NOTED that Deans have requested that procedures must be cut-back in order to meet the target response rate of 4-5 weeks.

69.3.2 Faculty Board emphasised the critical nature of this situation and requested that it is resolved as a matter of urgency.

69.4 AUT Strike

69.4.1 It was NOTED that the strike action will affect the upgrade from MPhil to PhD meetings expected to take place during June. It was AGREED that there is no school policy but that the Associate Dean and Dean were prepared to intervene where necessary, ensuring that fair and proper procedures were followed.

69.4.2 It was NOTED that the involvement of an external in the upgrade procedure may be advisable.

CJH  
23 May 2006  
Confirmed by Chair.