

SOAS
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
FACULTY BOARD

Tuesday 24 January 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*	Erika Rackow (UG Student rep)
Prof Laurence Harris	Indira Campos (PG 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.

26 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

- 26.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2005 were APPROVED as an accurate record with the following correction:
- o 16.3.1 – Library – to read “It was NOTED that the two librarians have been re-instated pending the completion of the ACAS process”

27 MATTERS ARISING

- 27.1 RAE (Minute 15.3.2 refers)
- 27.1.1 It was NOTED that externals have been identified from only the Law department for the mock RAE exercises.
- 27.1.2 It was also NOTED that the Dean has a meeting with the new RAE Director (Prof David Arnold) and the Associate Dean Research (Prof Michael Palmer) later this week.
- 27.2 Library (Minute 16.3.4 refers)
It was NOTED that a meeting has now taken place with library staff.
- 27.3 Communications – Resources Committee (Minute 16.4.1 refers)
It was NOTED that the only nomination from the school for the enhanced membership of Resources Committee / Executive Board was from L&SS – for Prof Henry Bernstein to join Resources Committee.

27.4 Careers and Student Services Reports (Minutes 22 and 23 refer)
It was NOTED that the Dean had forwarded the concerns raised by the student representatives to Jo Halliday, who is anxious to follow-up the issues raised with the students.

28 DEAN'S REPORT

28.1 New Director
It was NOTED that the second round of interviews for a new Director will take place on 26/27 January. The Deans are involved in the first day of the process, as are two academic staff reps and student reps.

28.2 Library - ACAS Process
It was NOTED that ACAS are coordinating steps to improve the industrial relations environment in the school, and that those involved are making good initial progress. One of the outcomes so far is that HR will aim to present a complete suite of all HR-related policies by the end of February 2006.

28.3 Common Spine Negotiations

28.3.1 It was NOTED that because of the above ACAS process, negotiations regarding the common pay spine have been delayed until the summer term, and that the process is expected to extend beyond August 2006, with any adjustments backdated.

28.3.2 It was NOTED that, within this context, discussions will be taking place with Heads of Department regarding contracts for EAA staff, including consideration of the introduction of fractional teaching contracts. The financial implications of this are not yet known.

28.4 Library Strategy Working Group

The two nominations for faculty representation on the above group were AGREED as: Bob Ash and Steve Hopgood.

29 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING PG)

29.1 Publication of Provisional MA/MSc results

It was NOTED that the response from FLTC was still not in favour of publishing provisional marks to students. However it was NOTED that the pressure from students for feedback after the May/June is understandable. Sonja agreed to bring a full report to the next meeting from FLTC.

29.2 Intercollegiate Courses for MA/MSc students

It was NOTED that there are financial and academic implications of MA/MSc students taking courses outside the approved programme structure. It was therefore NOTED that departments should consider making formal agreements with other UoL colleges to add appropriate courses to the programme structures. This should be done in liaison with the Deputy Registrar (Nick Page) and proposals submitted to FLTC and Faculty Board for approval.

29.3 MSc Political Economy of Development

The paper clarifying the course choices was NOTED.

30 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING PG)

30.1 Special Assessment Arrangements

It was NOTED that progress is ongoing regarding establishing a special assessment panel, to ensure that arrangements fully accommodate the requirements of disability legislation and ensure consistency for students across the school. The proposal will be presented to FLTC and Faculty Board in due course, with effect from 2006/7.

31 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH)

31.1 Publications Database

The proposal from the Faculty Administrators was RECEIVED. It was AGREED that improvements to the database are much needed, and that it has the full support of Faculty Board. The proposal will next be forwarded to Research Policy Committee for consideration.

31.2 RAE

It was NOTED that an initial meeting has been arranged for the new RAE Director, Professor David Arnold, with the Dean and Associate Dean Research for Friday 27 January.

31.3 Faculty Research Website

It was NOTED that the new website was primarily for the benefit of research students, to provide information about the key elements of their programme.

31.4 Library Opening Hours

It was NOTED that this issue is being actively discussed by the Library Review Group and that positive result is expected. Faculty Board strongly supported this.

31.5 MPhil / PhD Supervisory Arrangements

31.5.1 It was NOTED that several research students had requested clarification regarding supervisory arrangements. It was NOTED that the description in the Research Handbook is aspirational but unrealistic, and that this should be reviewed in light of current student complaints – particularly to clarify that the responsibility for progress rests with the student themselves.

31.5.2 It was NOTED that the Log Book was intended to address these issues, but that it was not universally used. Concern was NOTED that the onus for completing the Log Book currently lies with the student, but that this should maybe more appropriately lie with the Supervisor.

31.5.3 Faculty Board suggested that the regulations and guidelines were reviewed and redrafted.

31.6 LSE PhD Programme

It was NOTED that LSE will be leaving the Senate House arrangements for PhD awards.

32 SCHOOL OF LAW – BUSINESS PLAN

- 32.1 It was NOTED that the report was an operational response to the Butler report.
- 32.2.1 Faculty Board was particularly asked to consider paragraph 18 regarding the pre-session course. It was NOTED that the separate charging for this course will generate revenue for the Law School. This was welcomed as a model for other departments as being within the principles of the Faculty Business Plan.
- 32.2.2 It was NOTED that the full business plan, including more detailed costings, will be required before bids can be submitted to Resources Committee.
- 32.2.3 It was NOTED that the current Faculty Business Plan is coming to an end, and that the process of redrafting will begin soon. Concern was therefore NOTED regarding the Law School submitting a separate business plan outside this process. Concern was also NOTED regarding the impact of the plan on the limited resources available to the faculty.
- 32.2.4 However, it was also NOTED that the principle of income generation applies to all departments, and that a similar consultation is beginning with Development Studies and CDPR. It was also NOTED that there is no intention to privilege the Law School over other departments.
- 32.3 It was NOTED by the student representatives that there is a lack of regional Law courses available to UG students. It was NOTED that the qualifying requirements limit the choice for LLB students, and that it is therefore expensive for the department to offer a broad range of regional options. It was AGREED that it is important to ensure that courses are run regularly, even if not every year.
- 32.4 The issue of cross-faculty MSc programmes was discussed, focussing on specific areas of common interest eg Human Rights. It was NOTED that Phil Deans had coordinated some discussions about this in the past, and that they should be resumed via FLTC.

33 PROSPECTUS AND WEB PAGES

- 33.1 It was NOTED that SOAS is being taken to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education as a result of a course description in another faculty being significantly different from the delivery. All departments were requested to pay particularly attention to this.

34 NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

- 34.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following new COURSE had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:

- Law and Regulation of Electronic Finance and Internet Banking (DeFiMS Distance Learning)

The course was APPROVED.

35 NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSALS

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

- MSc International Management (China) (DeFiMS Distance Learning)

The programme was recommended to L&TPC for approval.

36 NEW CENTRE CONSTITUTION

36.1 The constitution for the new Centre of International Law and Colonialism was RECEIVED and APPROVED.

It was NOTED that there were no financial implications.

37 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37.1 It was NOTED that there was none.

CJH
January 2006
Confirmed by Chair