

SOAS
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
FACULTY BOARD

24 January 2008

MINUTES

Ella Bova (PG Student rep) **	Dr Stephen Hopgood
Prof Christopher Cramer	Dr Tat Yan Kong
Professor Matthew Craven (Chair)	Dr Costas Lapavitsas
Mr Luke Dillon	Prof Machiko Nissanke
Mr Ian Edge	Mabasher Rasul (UG student rep) **
Mr Norman Flynn	Ms Sonja Ruehl
Dr Jane Harrigan	Dr Alfredo Saad-Filho
Prof Laurence Harris	Dr Lynn Welchman

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.

29 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

29.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2007 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

30 MATTERS ARISING

30.1 IFCELS – English Language Requirements (item 20. 8 refers)

30.1.1 It was NOTED that the standard requirement for PG students is 7.0 not 6.0.

30.1.2 It was NOTED that Sue Yates had attended a recent Executive Board and had reported that L&SS were ‘uncooperative’ regarding the apparent lack of enthusiasm for her suggestion regarding a two-year offer (including Foundation AND MA/MSc programme). It was CONFIRMED that there is no opposition to the idea, but that there is concern regarding the comparability re externally recruited students and the quality of the IFCELS Foundation programme.

30.1.3 The Dean encouraged all departments to liaise with IFCELS regarding the proposals, ensuring that entry criteria are clearly agreed. It was NOTED that Economics have recently agreed an increase in entry requirements from IFCELS students in line with feedback from previous student profiles.

30.1.4 It was AGREED that the Faculty Administrator would attempt to track data regarding previous IFCELS students who progressed to L&SS MA/MSc programmes to evaluate if there is a difference in performance as perceived.

30.2 Assessment Guidelines for PG Students (Item 23.2 refers)

It was NOTED that this is ongoing.

30.3 JYA Student Assessment (Item 23.3)
This item was deferred until after discussion at the next FLTC.

31 DEAN'S REPORT

31.1 Economics Departmental Review

It was NOTED that at the recent DPR, very positive comments were made regarding the preparatory paperwork and Self-Evaluation Statement - but that no feedback had yet been received from the panel.

31.2 Permanent Fractional Contracts

31.2.1 It was NOTED that information regarding each individual's contract hours etc had been sent to HR – and that a number of key concerns arising from this process had been identified.

31.2.2 It was NOTED that it is hoped that contracts will be issued in February, although the transition between payroll systems mid-session would be very complicated.

31.3 Framework Agreement

It was NOTED that this is ongoing, that some staff are still being interviewed, and that conclusions are therefore likely to be delayed slightly.

31.4 Workload Model

31.4.1 A first draft workload model, as sketched out by the Dean and Faculty Administrator, was circulated for discussion and comments.

31.4.2 Sonja Ruehl to provide details of relevant categories for Distance Learning staff.

31.4.3 It was NOTED that some courses don't fit into this standard model (e.g. Human Rights Clinic). The suggestion that each department had its own model was raised.

31.4.4 The importance of a model for transparency, particularly within departments, was AGREED – and the obvious next step of using the model to 'equalise' workloads was NOTED, with the Board AGREEING that we need to be prepared for comparisons between departments.

31.4.5 It was NOTED that use of the model will inevitably raise questions about the relative 'weight' of roles/tasks.

31.4.6 Suggestions for additional categories and other changes should be sent to the Faculty Administrator for incorporation into the next draft. It was AGREED that the model should remain relatively simple so that it does not consume too much Faculty Office (and academic) time.

31.4.7 It was NOTED that the model will be useful as:

- a descriptor of actual workloads/roles
- a planning tool for the next session.

31.4.8 It was NOTED that the model should be primarily completed in the Faculty Office, with individuals then the Head of Department being asked to check/amend/confirm the details – and that this process will help to iron out

discrepancies between the detail on the timetable, contracts and tutorial group information.

32 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING)

32.1 Proposal re Confirmation of Assessment Marks

The proposal from the Faculty Administrator to reduce the number of gaps/errors in the student mark profiles was APPROVED. It was NOTED that the final check by Course Convenors is to 'fill gaps' and to check for anomalies, not to check the data-entry (which will have already been double-checked within the Faculty Office).

32.2 Forthcoming changes to Politics UG Structure

32.2.1 It was recommended that Politics follow the general structure adopted by Economics in specifying the structure of each degree – to view it as a communication process and to clearly specify the minimum requirements for the Politics 'half' of two-subject degrees.

32.2.2 It was NOTED that the department's aim is to increase the minimum number of Politics courses for two-subject students to 6, but that the school 'norm' is 5. It was recommended that pre-requisites be introduced to clarify routes through the degree.

32.3 Mitigating Circumstances

It was NOTED that the concerns re lack of consistency in the consideration of mitigating circumstances have been taken up by a working group as part of a wider discussion re disability issues. The initial recommendation is that the Special Assessments Panel takes responsibility for the process, but this cannot be implemented for 07/08.

32.4 Report from External Programme Quality and Student Life-Cycle Sub-Committee

The key recommendation was that all quality assurance mechanisms be centralised through the University of London rather than through the SOAS QA mechanisms. It was AGREED that this was not appropriate for the Distance Learning programmes, but that it would be more appropriate for the External LLB as this is not run entirely SOAS.

33 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH)

33.1 Research Leave for 2008/9

33.1.1 It was NOTED that applications received have been discussed by FMG and Heads of Department, and will be considered at the next Faculty Research Committee then (for final approval) at the next Faculty Board meeting.

33.1.2 It was NOTED that a proposal had been made by some members of the School of Law that applications are considered a year in advance – primarily to ensure that a clear picture of staff availability, and therefore of courses running & not running, could be available at the beginning of the student application cycle. However, it was AGREED that this would create a number of administrative problems, particularly relating to applications for external funding, and to Heads of Department not having sufficient information regarding staff leave

requests/entitlements to make the necessary decisions. It was AGREED that staff should be encouraged to 'flag' leave requests to their Head of Department early if appropriate.

33.1.3 It was, however, AGREED, that the Faculty could consider bringing the process forward within the academic session i.e. to receive applications during term 1.

33.2 Research Funding

33.2.1 Grants awarded by Faculty Research Committee were NOTED:

- Henry Bernstein (Devp Studies) - £2,500
- Ben Fine (Economics) - £3,000 [NB these inter-departmental seminars are to attempt to influence LIDC's direction, not to fund their work.]
- Costas Lapavitsas (Economics) - £2,000
- Jens Lerche (Devp Studies) - £2,500
- Jap Toporowski (Economics) - £2,000
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33.2.2 It was NOTED that £6k remains in the budget, to be allocated at the next FRC meeting.

33.3 Research Training Programme

33.3.1 It was NOTED that the course proposal for the revised Faculty-wide Research Training programme was expected imminently, and would be considered at the next meeting.

33.3.2 It was NOTED that a proposal (from the LTU?) has been made for a school-wide training programme. The initial impression from Faculty Board is that this is not necessary for L&SS.

34 **HONORARY APPOINTMENTS**

34.1 The Faculty Administrator's summary of the various honorary appointments (and procedures, entitlements etc) was welcomed.

34.2 It was questioned whether practioners could be included in the category of Research Associates – this is particularly relevant to CISD. It was SUGGESTED that CISD propose that a new category of "CISD Fellow" to the next meeting, for consideration by Academic Board.

35 **COMMUNICATION FROM FACULTY BOARD**

35.1 The importance of representatives on the Faculty Committees (Faculty Board, Faculty Learning & Teaching Committee and Faculty Research Committee) reporting back to Department Meetings as standing items was AGREED.

35.2 It was also NOTED that the minutes should be circulated more promptly following the meetings.

36 **CISD CONSTITUTION**

36.1 The new constitution, as agreed at the last CISD Executive Board, was AGREED for recommendation to Academic Board.

- 36.2 The process for recruiting PhD students was discussed, particularly whether student applications would need to be considered by both CISD and the registering department.
- 36.3 It was felt that until CISD has its own research training programme, and is approved by Registry to register MPhil/PhD students, potential students would be approved by, and admitted to, existing departmental PhD programmes. However, it was AGREED that Dan Plesch would liaise with David Atkins and Rosa Abidi to confirm the necessary procedures.

37 NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSALS

- 37.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following new PROGRAMME had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:
- (i) MA Environmental Law and Sustainable Development (Law)
 - (ii) UG Economics curriculum. It was noted that these changes were in response to Visiting Examiners comments, and that Registry had been extremely complementary regarding the proposals.

This programme was RECOMMENDED to L&TPC for approval.

38 NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

- 38.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following NEW COURSES had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:
- (i) Dissertation in International Management (China) (DeFiMS)
 - (ii) Dissertation in International Management (Japan) (DeFiMS)
 - (iii) Dissertation in International Management (MENA) (DeFiMS)
 - (iv) Dissertation in Finance and Financial Law (DeFiMS)
 - (v) Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Economists (Econ UG)
 - (vi) Quantitative Methods for Economists (Econ UG)

These courses were APPROVED.

39 COURSE AMENDMENTS

- 39.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following COURSE AMENDMENTS had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:
- (i) Comparative Growth in Asia and Africa - 153400102
 - (ii) Econometrics - 153400103
 - (iii) Economic Development of Africa - 153400101
 - (iv) Economic Development of Japan Since 1868 - 153400013
 - (v) Economic Development of Modern China - 153400025
 - (vi) Economic Development of South Asia - 153400011
 - (vii) Economic Development of South East Asia - 153400012
 - (viii) Economic Development of the Modern Middle East - 153400031
 - (ix) Economics of Developing Countries 1 - 153400032
 - (x) Independent Study Project - 153400114
 - (xi) Intermediate Economic Analysis - 153400107

- (xii) Introduction to Economic Analysis – 153400003
- (xiii) Law of Obligations – 155200004
- (xiv) Public International Law – 155200025
- (xv) Public Law - 155200005

These course amendments were APPROVED.

40 TEACHER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

40.1 The following staff were RECOMMENDED to Academic Board for approval as Teachers of the University of London (from September 2008):

- Richard ALEXANDER (DeFiMS)
- Damian TOBIN (DeFiMS)

- Laura HAMMOND (Development Studies)
- Michael JENNINGS (Development Studies)
- Zoe MARRIAGE (Development Studies)

- Myriam BLIN (Economics)
- Jan TOPOROWSKI (Economics)

- Prabha KOTISWARAN (Law)
- Emilia ONYEMA (Law)

- Fiona ADAMSON (Politics and International Studies)
- Dafydd FELL (Politics and International Studies)
- Lawrence SAEZ (Politics and International Studies)
- Leslie VINJAMURI (Politics and International Studies)

41 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

41.1 Peer Observation of Teaching

It was NOTED that as required by the AUT, the form is deliberately not evaluative. However, concern was NOTED that this won't satisfy the QAA.

41.2 Website

It was NOTED that staff were having difficulties updating information on departmental websites, including a bottle-neck where all changes need to be centrally approved. Departments were advised to raise specific queries with Jamie Bruce (inc email), and that she would be invited to attend Faculty Board in term 3, and to a Head of Department meeting later this term.

Date of Next Meeting

21 February 2008 at 1.15pm

CJH
8 February 2008
Confirmed by Chair