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SOAS
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
FACULTY BOARD

22nd January 2009

MINUTES

Professor Christopher Cramer	Dr Tat Yan Kong
Professor Matthew Craven (Chair)	Dr Costas Lapavitsas*
Mr Richard Story	Dr Martin Lau
	Irfan Mehmood (PG Student rep)
Mr Norman Flynn *	Dr Dan Plesch
Professor Jane Harrigan	Ms Sonja Ruehl
Professor Laixiang Sun	Professor Alfredo Saad Filho
Dr Salwa Ismail	Professor Ben Fine*
	Professor Lynn Welchman

In attendance: Mr Simon Buller (Secretary) *
Mrs Barbara Spina

Those whose names are marked with an asterisk were unable to attend the meeting.

1.0 GUEST SPEAKERS

1.1 It was NOTED that Graeme Appleby, Director of Finance did not respond to request to attend. The Chair will reissue the invite to attend the next meeting.

2.0 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

2.1 It was NOTED that under 1.1 Michael Sherry's openness to make Faculty officers super-users had not happened. RS confirmed two had been trained and training will continue this month. The issue of webpage changes that are rolled back is one for the web team to understand and remedy.

Action point: Simon to ensure training for superusers in the Faculty

3.0 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 - 3.2, it was NOTED that the review of the role of the Heads of Department was on-going.

3.2 - 6.2 Work Load Model statistics were NOTED to the committee showing that 42.5% of academic staff had completed their forms over the last quarter of 2008 with DeFiMS and Law returning the highest percentage. The Chair remarked that this process needs to continue until complete. It was AGREED that once completed WLM for each department, then the Faculty can decide what will be done with them and who will have access.

Action: Simon to ensure WLM is finished.

4.0 DEAN'S REPORT

4.1 It was NOTED that the Dean will go to each Department meeting to review the RAE results. The Finance Director has estimated the school is

likely to lose £500,000 to £1,000,000 across the school. It is thought that the post-1992 model will be used rather than the Big Four model for fund allocation next year. This model is weighted more toward science and technology institutions, so the estimate may be generous.

It was NOTED that one impact on the school might mean the withdrawal of advertised posts once the actual funding amount is known in early March 2009. The Dean commented that the Faculty may still be in surplus after the RAE funding reduction is applied.

In addition it was NOTED:

- a. Graeme Furniss will ask each department for their feedback on the RAE results
- b. The need for a research strategy has been identified School-wide. The Faculty Research Committee will be charged with preparing a strategy and each of the departments should follow suit.
 - i. It was noted that successful submissions had specific project focus and that this should be the approach for department and Faculty. There needs to be an identification of areas of particular specialisation where we are seen to lead in the country.
- c. The next RAE is 2013 with a Dec 2012 submission deadline.

4.2 It was NOTED that completed department plans for 2010 are required from Heads of departments by September 2009; HoD's are encouraged to begin this process now.

4.3 It was NOTED that the Dean is looking to replace Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) for Ms Sonja Ruehl who is stepping down in August 2009.

5.0 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING)

5.1 The Associate Dean reminded the departments that the peer observation of teaching must continue with an end of term 2 deadline. It was AGREED that the ASO team would re-send the forms to staff.

Action point: Simon to arrange that ASO team re-send Peer observation form

5.2 It was NOTED that the DeFiMS BSc International Management (China) programme was on a tight schedule to meet the Sept 2009 start date, going through the next Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee, Programme Proposal Panel and the Learning Teaching and Quality Committee that follows soon after. The Associate Dean highlight that it was critical as the programme has already been advertised as well as featuring in the prospectus. Target numbers are 8 home and 8 overseas, with 30 applications received so far.

5.3 It was NOTED that Departments are encouraged to submit any new course proposals or amendments by the 5th February 2009 Faculty

Learning And Teaching Committee at the latest while programme proposals for 2010 should be submitted now.

6.0 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH)

6.1 In the absence of the Associate Dean (Research), the Chair asked all departments to provide a summary of their PhD programmes to Costas who must make a similar report for programmes for the Faculty to the school. Summaries are needed by Jan 30th.

Action point: HoDs to provide summaries by Jan 30th

7.0 REPORT FROM FACULTY ADMINISTRATOR

In the absence of the Faculty Administrator, the Faculty Project Leader NOTED:

7.1 Fractional Permanent Contract payroll is going forward and pay issues are being resolved. Most of the contract and pay issues should be cleared by end of January 2009.

7.2 OFFA have granted £26,716 to the Faculty for support of UG students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Graduate Teaching Assistants will meet with these students within the Faculty through UCAS lists to provide additional academic support. An academic advisor from the Faculty will coordinate. The programme will be running for term 3, in time for the examination period.

8.0 REPORT FROM THE HEAD, TEACHING & RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Head, Teaching & Research Committee NOTED the following:

8.1 *Staffing:*

Director of Information Services and Learning Support (new post): John Robinson (currently Executive Director of Services at JISC, seconded from King's College) has been appointed and starts on 1st March. The Director will line-manage the Library, IT and Management Information Systems (MIS) and is charged with the integration of SOAS information services and learning support activities.

Head of Library:

David Perrow, Interim Librarian, completes his term at the end of February. Internal applications were sought in November for the new post of Head of Library reporting to the Director of Information Services and Learning Support. As there were no applications, in the short term the Senior Management Team will rotate responsibility weekly.

8.2 *E-resources - ProjectMuse:*

In addition to the 1,000 additional e-journal titles acquired through subscriptions to Jstor, Sage and OUP reported in the November meeting, the Library now has access to 200+ new titles through ProjectMuse (Humanities and Social Sciences packages), plus off-campus access to all ProjectMuse titles (previously unavailable)

8.3 *Collection Development Policy Revision:*

Review and updating of the Collection Development Policy (last revised in

2005) is being undertaken by a small working party. The final document is to be prescriptive rather than descriptive and publicly available online. Key concepts guiding the remit are (a) support for research (at SOAS and also at a regional and national level) and (b) identifying and building on strengths.

8.4 *Building works:*

The Library has received funding from HEFCE for a major overhaul of the Library building on three floors, including heating, lighting and plumbing which was considered to be long overdue, plus a smaller sum from Wolfson/RLUK for part-funding a refurbishment of the Library entrance area, including opening up the ground floor area. A comprehensive plan is being devised with the help of the College architects for submission to the School in the Spring term.

9.0 **FACULTY ISSUES**

9.1 The change to the academic contract, giving the school rights over staff intellectual property was discussed. It was understood that this was intended for courses developed where the academic subsequently leaves with teaching materials and course outlines remaining. It was NOTED that the wording is ambiguous and could apply to articles/publication undertaken while employed at the college.

Action point: Dean will look into this matter

9.2 It was NOTED that for Language courses taken as floating units, both UG and PG students attend the same course but the assessment means are different according to their degree. The Board CONSIDERED three solutions to solve this quality issue. The committee favoured separate PG language courses - consisting of a shared lecture with UG and additional PG seminars exclusively.

9.3 A discussion ensued regarding LLM/MA courses that were 100% assessed by one paper. The submission date had to conform to the school deadline (early May) but the deadline was preferred to be at the end of May. The Associate Dean commented that the Registry unlikely to approve this, however since this affects the LLM/MA students chiefly, they should put in to change the LLM regulations.

The Dean RECOMMENDED taking the matter back to the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee and if there is no resolution, then it could be taken to the Learning Teaching and Quality Committee.

The Chair commented on the rigidity of the Registry with regard to open book examinations. The Registry needs to adopt exam methods and practices already in place in other institutions and to understand that diverse means of examination are advantageous.

Action point: Law dept to submit regulation change request to FLTC

9.4 It was NOTED that registers will become mandatory from 2009/10 as the Home Office will require updates on attendance for all overseas visa requiring students. The Dean is anxious to develop an approach to capturing this information before the start of 2009/10.

A discussion followed on the current system and its inadequacies. It was noted that late/inaccurate registration statistics are a great part of this problem.

Action point: Simon Buller is to update the FB on class tracking

10.0 COURSE PROPOSALS

Due to missing appendices it was AGREED that the following NEW COURSES would be CONFIRMED by Chairs Action as recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee :

CeDEP

- C110 Agricultural Trade Policy
- C170 Introduction to Environmental Economics and Policy
- C132 NGO Management
- C135 Socio Economics of Rural Livelihoods

Note: The four CeDep courses were RECONSIDERED at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee meeting and it was NOTED that all requested amendments and signatures are now complete.

With regards to Section 15 and continuous assessment, the Programme Director would be asked to give an update on progress in introducing assessed coursework, after the programme Annual Review in February 2009. However, Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee RECOMMEND APPROVAL to the Faculty Board.

Economics

- Political Economy of Agrarian Change and Development - PGT

11.0 COURSE AMMENDMENTS AND DELETIONS

11.1 Due to missing appendices it was AGREED that the following COURSE AMENDMENTS AND DELETIONS would be CONFIRMED by Chairs Action as recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee :

Development Studies amendment:

- 151010022 Theory and Evidence in Contemporary Development

Law deletion

- 15 520 0038 Comparative Commercial Law
- 15 520 0047 Comparative Company Law

12.0 NEXT FACULTY BOARD

12.1 Date of next meeting was NOTED as Thursday 19th February 2009 at 1.15pm Room 116