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## SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

### Faculty of Law and Social Sciences FACULTY BOARD

#### MINUTES

Wednesday 2 November 2011

Dr Fiona Adamson  
Professor Mashood Baderin \*  
Ms Carrie Barnett  
Professor Stephen Chan (Chair)  
Professor Chris Cramer  
Dr Deborah Johnston  
Ms Ingrida Kerusauskaite  
Dr Jens Lerche  
Dr Dan Plesch \*

Dr Nigel Poole  
Dr Lawrence Saez  
Dr Graham Smith  
Mr Laurence Smith  
Ms Jeanne Spencer \*  
Professor Laixiang Sun \*  
Dr Carol Tan  
Dr Jan Toporowski \*

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

Those members whose names are marked with an asterisk were unable to be present.

#### 1. DEAN'S WELCOME

1.1. The Dean welcomed all members especially student reps and new members.

#### 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The Terms of Reference were NOTED.

#### 3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2011 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

#### 4. ACTION POINTS

4.1 25 – Professional category for Honorary Appointments  
It was NOTED that this proposal is still awaited from the Head of Law.

4.2 34(d) – Principles of employment of Teaching Fellows  
It was NOTED that fractional staff doing work at both G6 and G7 are being paid at the higher level.

#### 5. MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs) (Minute 90a refers)

It was NOTED that the University of London are yet to rubber-stamp the recent approval and that the nomenclature is still to be decided.

**5.2** Faculty Senior Tutor (Minute 90b refers)

It was NOTED that the Faculty Senior Tutor position had been advertised & interviewed, and a suitable candidate identified. However when the faculty sought to offer an honorarium this was embargoed at a recent EB. The decision regarding this post is therefore delayed. The Dean has asked for the decision to be revisited. The view of the Dean is that this is a Faculty position within our available resources. Faculty Board gave strong backing for this – it was NOTED that the previous decision within the faculty for this post had not been unanimous but ultimately that we had decided to make this appointment after encouragement from the School.

**6. DEAN'S REPORT**

**6.1.** Student Numbers

It was NOTED that there is currently an ongoing debate regarding whether we only count those students who have fully completed the necessary enrolment procedures or whether we also count those who have partially completed these (including a number of returning students).

However it is clear that the Faculty is overall on-target regarding recruitment for 11/12 notwithstanding CISD's under-recruitment.

**6.2.** Strategic Plan

The Faculty's healthy recruitment means that the faculty plan for 12/13 onwards continues - with one definite change (the Lectureship in CISD has been postponed for 1 year) and one still being negotiated (additional Lectureship in Economics still to be decided). All other appointments and aspects of the Faculty Plan will go forward.

It was NOTED that A&H are able only to replace posts, and L&C are not able to make any appointments at all.

**6.3.** Higher Education Sector

It was NOTED that it is not known what the UG market will be like for 12/13 entry – and that there are many uncertainties regarding the government massaging via the AAB issue. It was NOTED that Executive Board is mapping potential routes through this, including a focus on expansion at AAB level within the Departments of Politics and Law

It was also NOTED that PGT recruitment is also vexed on account of the Tier 4 visa difficulties & global recession. It was questioned whether the Bloomsbury Consortium could work together to resource the Tier 4-related processes.

**6.4** Preparation for REF

It was NOTED that preparations for the forthcoming REF would clearly be of highest priority during this session, including the appointment of up to 10 x 0.2fte Professors within the faculty.

**6.5** Student Feedback

It was NOTED that the departmental National Student Survey (NSS) action plans for 11/12 are to be submitted by Heads of Department soon – and also that the forthcoming QAA

Review will be driven by student feedback.

6.6 School Budget 11/12

It was NOTED that the School is running a deficit budget in 11/12 and that the Governors have agreed that we can do so again next session, at approximately £200-300k.

It was also NOTED that the cross-subsidy to the Faculty of Arts & Humanities has ended as of 11/12 – this continues to Languages & Cultures.

**7. REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING)**

7.1. Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee (FLTC)

Noted that the first meeting of FLTC this session has taken place, and the next is scheduled on 24 November. It was NOTED that the Chair of LTQC has stated that no programmes or courses should be approved by Chair's Action, but rather through the scheduled committees. Members are therefore reminded that the final meeting at which new/amended courses can be approved for 12/13 is scheduled for 29 February 2012.

7.2 Course Registrations

It was NOTED that a number of late changes were allowed during the week following the deadline of 14 October – but that it is now too late for further changes, the only exceptions being where 'illegal' choices have been made that prevent a student from continuing their programme.

7.3 QAA Institutional Review

It was NOTED that the Institutional Review requires evidence to be uploaded by 17 December 2012 and will culminate in a visit during the w.b. 4 March 2013. Preparations are beginning and will absorb much attention throughout this session and the beginning of 12/13. ADD have taken advice from the Universities of Exeter and York who are going through the new-style review now.

7.4 Student Feedback (NSS)

It was NOTED that the categories of student response raising the most concerns are academic support, and assessment and feedback.

7.5 Postgraduate Portfolio Review

It was NOTED that following the previous review of UG provision, the review of PGT provision has been started.

Key aims are as follows:

- To ensure that provision is distinctive and is aligned with the School's research
- To provide a high quality experience for all PGT students
- To ensure that the PGT provision meets market needs
- To review and make recommendations regarding credit structures in order to enhance the opportunities for collaboration (both internally and externally).

Initial discussions have taken place within FMG and departments have been asked to feedback responses to ADD about themes to be covered within this broad scope.

7.6. Language Provision

It was NOTED that discussions have been held within Departments regarding language provision. Most departments in L&SS have expressed the view that final year students should not take introductory level language courses. Considering the School's language

entitlement policy, it will be helpful for Departments to ensure that the curriculum allows students to take languages as open options in years 1 and 2.

The Student reps NOTED difficulties within some UG degree structures for students to fit language courses into years 1 or 2 – especially LLB – stating that for some students this is one of the main reasons students come to SOAS.

Departments feel strongly that the final year should be largely discipline-focused.

It was AGREED that the Associate Dean L&T should follow the advice of Departments – and that Departments should ensure/create additional flexibility within years 1 & 2 as appropriate to each discipline.

It was also NOTED that a possible move towards a new credit structure at PG level (see the PG Portfolio Review, item 7.5) may facilitate inclusion of languages in PG programmes, creating additional opportunities without debating the degree's disciplinary integrity.

It was NOTED by the Student Reps that students would be likely to support the move to a 4+1 credit structure, particularly if it allowed flexibility for a language (or other) course with PGT programmes.

## **8. REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH)**

### **8.1 Doctoral School**

The Dean NOTED that the Faculty's scepticism regarding the proposal as it is currently stated was represented at this week's Research Committee.

The paper summarising departmental responses to the paper was tabled. It was NOTED that the responses are largely negative.

The Dean encouraged members to make constructive comments to this proposal:

- rather than to create a new centralised structure, we should instead focus on improving the existing functions
- surprised re no specific details within the proposal re resource implications
- management & authority structures need to be specified including how the Doctoral School fits with individual Departments
- colleagues recognise paragraph 5 (of Deborah's summary paper) as important re the potential benefits of a Doctoral School.
- Concern re work into each of our Departments to improve our research methods programmes and that this isn't diluted by the doctoral school

It was NOTED that Academic Board will make the decision regarding this proposal.

### **8.2 FRC Annual Report for 10/11**

The FRC Annual Report for 10/11 was NOTED.

(i) The issue of funded PhD places is being considered – it was also NOTED that we have far fewer p/t PhD students than other institutions. It was AGREED that the permitted movement between p/t and f/t should be more widely publicised – also the part-present mode.

(ii) The need for the Faculty to devise faculty-wide research strategy was NOTED, in order for all departments within the faculty to discuss and agree key elements of our research direction to focus on research-value not just on the demands from the REF.

## **9. REPORT FROM FACULTY ADMINISTRATOR**

### **9.1. Faculty Budgets**

It was NOTED that much of finance generated by the Faculty is ring-fenced for staff salaries and cross-subsidy, but that we have much higher element of discretionary funding than the other faculties.

- Eminent visiting scholar scheme - NOTED that a budget of £50k has been agreed for 11/12. Discussions will begin with HoDs about this.
- Staff budget – NOTED we approval to appoint 10 x 0.2fte Professor appointments for REF for 12/13
- General Expenses (4205) budgets - AGREED these should be revisited for 12/13 (in line with updated staff & student numbers).
- Admissions Assistants Keeping Warm budget – it was AGREED that this should include MPhil students (particularly later in the cycle). It was also suggested that Admissions Team should carry out systematic follow-up of MPhil and PGT applicants who do NOT enrol at SOAS – and to identify whether there are patterns over the last few years.

### **9.2. Workload Model**

The revised model was NOTED. It was NOTED that this is a faculty model, in the context that the school requires us to have one and will continue pressure for us to follow a school-model if we do not have our own successful model.

The following comments were made:

- usage of the data is the key factor – Departments are nervous about how the model and the data will be used
- No provision for including distance learning – will become more important as this provision is offered by more Departments
- Faculty under pressure under from the school to fit in with the metrics for MPhil/PhD supervision ... A&H and L&C use metric in B-1-a (18 hours for 1<sup>st</sup> supervisor, 7.5 hours for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4.5 for 3<sup>rd</sup>). Colleagues were encouraged to consider this and see if it can be workable. Concern was NOTED that the role of the 2nd and 3rd supervisor are often very similar – but it was also NOTED that the suggested metric follows the RAM model for allocation of funds (80% in total – 50 to 1st, 25% to 2nd, 15% to 3rd).
- It was AGREED that this metric be used by HR in order to build a contract for external supervisors, but discussion about the detail of the model will continue.

## **10. LIBRARY MATTERS**

### **10.1. The Library Update report was NOTED.**

It was REQUESTED that Zotero training is implemented as quickly as possible, both for PhD students and staff. Faculty Board supported the Library's action to do this.

It was NOTED that FRC are expecting a response on the issue of inter-library loans at the next meeting.

**11. CENTRE FOR PALESTINIAN STUDIES**

11.1. The proposal was APPROVED.

**12. CHAIR'S ACTION**

12.1. The list of items dealt with by Chair's action during the summer was NOTED.

It was AGREED that programme proposals should not be considered via chairs action – that this did not enable sufficient time or consideration.

**13. PROGRAMME PROPOSALS**

13.1. The Committee APPROVED Part One of the following programme proposals:

CISD:

MA Global Diplomacy (Distance Learning)

School of Law:

PG Diploma in Law and Community Leadership

**14. COURSE PROPOSALS**

14.1 The Committee APPROVED the following course title change as recommended by the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee:

School of Law:

The Law of Armed Conflict (PG)

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 14 December 2011 at 1.15pm