These minutes are for information only. Any corrections to the minutes will be recorded in the minutes of the subsequent meeting of the committee.

School of Oriental and African Studies
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee

Thursday 5th February, 2009
9.00am in Room 116
MINUTES

Members: Departmental affiliation
Ms Sonja Ruehl Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching, Law and Social Sciences Faculty (Chair)
Dr Damien Tobin Defims
Dr Mike Jennings Development Studies
Dr Dic Lo Economics
Mr Nick Foster Law
Dr Dafydd Fell Politics and International Studies
Ms Claudia Brinkman (Postgraduate Student representative)
Ms Arianna Tassinari (Undergraduate Student representative)*

In Attendance:
Mr Nick Page - Head of Registry
Ms Barbara Spina - Head of Teaching & Research Support
Mrs Wangari Muoria-Sal - Committee Secretary
Professor Laixiang Sun (DefIMS BSc programme proposal item only)

*= not present

41. Minutes of the last meeting:

41.1 The minutes of the last meeting held 8th January, 2009 were APPROVED.

42. Matters Arising:

42.1 Minute item 28. AD reported that the Programme Modifications for 2010 would be considered once CeDep had provided their plans on how they intended to phase out courses in natural-sciences-based subjects. Minute item 36. Head of Registry reported that Languages and Cultues FLTC had agreed to propose a variant of the solution favoured by LASS FLTC to the problem of language acquisition coursesin Taught Masters’ programmes, in which a general seminar training programme would be run for Masters’ students on language acquisition and language use.

42.2 MSc Politics Programme Review 06/07 which had been returned for completion, was circulated as Appendix A and noted as now complete.

43. BSc Defims International Management (China) Programme Proposal – Part 2:

43.1 FLTC NOTED that the changes recommended at the previous FLTC meeting had been done. All that was remaining was for AD to check off the tick list and sign. It was NOTED that Part II form was now ready and would be presented at the next LTQC meeting together with Part III form.

44. Comments from Economics HOD on the BSc Programme Proposal:

44.1 Email correspondence from the HOD for Economics, AD and HOD for Defims was circulated and CONSIDERED by FLTC. The Head of Department for Defims was also invited to the meeting to report on the issues raised with regards to the formation of the BSc International Management (China) programme and the overlapping with some Economics courses. After a short session of question and answer FLTC were happy to
RECOMMEND the Programme and courses for APPROVAL to Faculty Board. However, NOTING that, as with all courses in programmes across the Faculty, some discussion would obviously take place after approval, to ensure that overlaps between courses were minimised.

44.2 It was NOTED that Dr Dic Lo would work on how best to deliver the Contemporary issues in China’s Economy which would be taught in 2011, in discussion with Professor Sun. It was noted that the question of Library resources for the new programme would be reported to PPP.

45. **Defs New Undergraduate BSc Course Proposals:**

45.1 Eighteen course proposals were RECONSIDERED BY FLTC (appendices D to U except S) and one course proposal was considered for the first time (appendix S). After additional minor amendments were made, it was NOTED that FLTC were happy to RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO PPP and LTQC and to forward to Faculty Board TO NOTE.

46. **CISD New Postgraduate Course Proposals:**

46.1 FLTC CONSIDERED the new CISD postgraduate course proposal entitled *Multinational Enterprises in a Globalizing World – Legal and Economic Perspectives*. It was NOTED that the proposal had not gone to Law for consideration and therefore FLTC were not happy to put it forward for approval by Faculty Board until The School of Law had considered its involvement in the course, as a course with strong legal aspects and one in which Law was listed as sharing 50% of the teaching.

47. **Development Studies Undergraduate Course Amendment:**

47.1 Amendments to the examining methods of *Introduction to Global Forced Migration Studies* from 50/50 to 60/40 were NOTED. It was noted that the 60:40 ratio predominates in the programme, in addition to the rationale given. FLTC AGREED for AD to RECOMMEND APPROVAL to Faculty Board.

48. **Development Studies Two Undergraduate Courses Withdrawal:**

48.1 FLTC NOTED the withdrawal of two Development Studies undergraduate courses: 151010031 Poverty, State Policy and Civil Society and 151010017 NGOs, the Third Sector & Development Policy – (appendices X and Y) were NOTED. This was due to staff changes and to the fact that the courses had not run over the last two academic sessions. FACULTY BOARD TO NOTE.

49. **Economics Department new BA and BSc Syllabus:**

49.1 FLTC RECEIVED the progress report from the Economics HOD with regards to the new BA and BSc Syllabus. It was noted that the Mathematics entry requirement had been raised to an ‘A’ grade for entry to the A-level, stream. FLTC recommended that there should be more flexibility for students to move down should they feel the higher mathematic syllabus was too difficult, given that some A level Maths syllabi do not now include differential calculus.

50. **Economics/Development Studies new Postgraduate Course Proposal:**

50.1 The new postgraduate course proposal *Agrarian Change and Development* (appendix A.1) was RECONSIDERED – It was NOTED that once section 4b was confirmed by signature of the other programmes in which the course was offered, FLTC were happy for AD to RECOMMEND APPROVAL to Faculty Board.

51. **Politics Undergraduate Programme Review 07/08:**

51.1 The Politics Undergraduate Programme Review for 07/08 was CONSIDERED. FLTC were happy to NOTE that recommendations made, by the External Examiners, with regard to the introduction of degree classification software to simplify Examination Board decision-making and procedures had been picked up and would be implemented for the next session. FLTC applauded the School for having taken notice of these comments now, though there had been a considerable time-lag since the External first made the suggestion.
Politics New Undergraduate Course Proposal:

FLTC CONSIDERED Government and Politics of China course, proposed to supersede ‘Chinese Politics of the 20th Century’ (Appendix C.1). Section 14 was amended to read ‘No’ (that was, there were no prerequisites or co-requisites). With that change, FLTC were happy to recommend the course for Approval by Faculty Board.

Politics New Postgraduate Course Proposal:

FLTC CONSIDERED two new Politics postgraduate course proposals entitled: Identity, Conflict and Violence (appendix D.1) and International Migration and Diaspora Politics (appendix E.1)

Concern was raised with regards to the capping of numbers at 15 students. It was noted that this was against current Faculty policy unless courses were repeat-taught. Also Section 14e – ‘Seminar Presentation’ – it was noted that any presentations weighted at over 10% should be recorded verbatim and supported with written handouts which could be seen by the External Examiner if required. No grades can be given simply for class attendance. Further, the proposed ‘contact hours’ including 4 hours of project work as well as 2 hours’ tutorial/seminar presentation, required clarification as egregiously high or else based on a misunderstanding of what ‘contact hours’ should include. It was agreed that the proposals (append D.1 and E.1) should be referred back to the proposer to reconsider the capping of 15 students and the other issues. Meanwhile, the whole issue of capping of student numbers would be raised at Faculty Board.

Politics MSc Middle East Politics – Programme/Course Amendment Proposal:

The amendments to the MSc Middle East Politics co-requisites for 4 half unit courses (appendix F.1) affecting Islamic Political Ideologies, Islam and Politics, Political Violence and The Politics of Resistance in the Middle East, was CONSIDERED.

These courses formed part of the programme of the MSc Middle East Politics so that the courses were built into a structured whole to achieve the educational aims and outcomes of the programme as per Programme specification. The proposers argued for a new need to limit the numbers of students taking these courses due to the form in which they were taught to achieve maximum effectiveness. This had been agreed at Departmental level.

FLTC was unable to recommend approval and recommended instead that further CONSIDERATION of the whole issue of student number-capping with additional justification should be made at Faculty Board level.

The School of Law and New Postgraduate Course Proposals:

The following three new course proposals were CONSIDERED by FLTC. Islamic Finance Law, Law and the Environment in South Asia LLM/MA, Migration, Gender and the Law in South Asia and Beyond LLM/MA (half unit).

It was NOTED that the proposals were not totally ready to be put forward to Faculty Board. Discussion of potential overlap with courses in Islamic Finance taught by DeFiMS was also needed in the case of Islamic Finance Law.

ACTION: wm to follow-up with law representative.

The School of Law Postgraduate Course Amendment:

FLTC NOTED the proposed amendment to the submission date of the following three courses: 15PLAC114 International and Comparative Commercial Transactions, 15PLAC116 International and Comparative Corporate Law, 15PLAC145 International Human Rights Clinic.

ACTION: FLTC NOTED that the proposed date fell outside the School deadline – therefore should be referred back for suitable date. The FLTC pointed out that a submission date which coincides with the
SOAS School deadline is highly undesirable, since a student submitting even one day late would automatically be awarded a mark of zero.

57. **The School of Law Postgraduate Course Amendment:**

57.1 Course amendment to ‘Arab Comparative Commercial Law’ 15PLAC144 – Section 9 – Syllabus and Objectives of the course recommending course to be taken by LLM students only, was NOTED by FLTC. Members were happy for AD to RECOMMEND APPROVAL to Faculty Board.

58. **The School of Law Proposed Changes of Masters Courses Assesses by Long Essay:**

58.1 FLTC CONSIDERED the proposal to change the submission deadline of all Masters’ Law courses assessed by 100% long essays to end of May ie end of examination period.

58.2 FLTC was unable to recommend this to Faculty Board because the proposed new deadline fell outside the SOAS School deadline.

58.3 FLTC would be happy to consider the matter further, and to take it further, but to do so required the School of Law to articulate its academic case in support of the change, for the next FLTC in April.

59. **The School of Law’s proposal to extend the deadline of the assessment of 5 postgraduate courses to the last day of the first week of the 3rd term:**

FLTC reiterated the warning: that a submission date which coincides with the SOAS School deadline was highly undesirable, since a student submitting even one day late would automatically be awarded a mark of zero.

Due to time constraint the following items below were considered at a separate small meeting with a smaller group – which would hereby be reported back to FLTC for confirmation.

60. **The School of Law’s Proposal for Open book exams for Masters students:**

Discussed separately due to meeting going over time.

60.1 It was agreed by the Law School FLTC member, the Dean, the Head of Registry and the AD, that Open Book examinations may be specified; but for logistical reasons, a maximum total number of items which may be taken in per student (say, 6), would be necessary.

61. **Permitted Materials in Examinations:**

Discussed separately due to meeting going over time.

61.1 A member of The School of Law proposed the following form of words to be permissible where specified in the examinations rubric:

61.2 "Marking of permitted materials: Candidates may use any combination of the following methods to mark permitted materials: underlining AND/OR coloured highlighting with a highlighter pen AND/OR markers in the form of tags. Tags must be attached firmly to pages and be visible when volumes were closed; tags may be colour-coded, but no writing or other marking was allowed on tags.

61.3 All other forms of personal marking were strictly forbidden. **THE USE OF A COPY MARKED IN ANY WAY OTHER THAN THOSE SET OUT ABOVE was AN EXAMINATION OFFENCE.**"

61.4 This form of words was accepted and approved by the AD on behalf of FLTC.

62. **Library Matters:**

62.1 FLTC RECEIVED a report on Library from Head of Teaching and Research Support.

63. **Cefims University of London Regulations:**

63.1 FLTC NOTED the Cefims University of London Regulations for 2009 (appendices T.1,U.1 and V.1) approved
by the AD.

AOB:

AOB.1 Paper from The School of Law requested FLTC to provisionally NOTE the proposal for SOAS to offer, in conjunction with key local partners in the PRC/HK, an External LLM.

AOB.2 Politics Postgraduate Course Amendment to MA International Relations:

FLTC NOTED the changes to the Learning outcomes of the course and changes to the Syllabus and Objectives of the course. It was NOTED that this was already in play and was being NOTED retrospectively. It was also NOTED that this would only affect the 08/09 session and that a new course proposal would be put forward for the next 09/10 session.

FLTC were happy to RECOMMEND temporary amendment for APPROVAL to Faculty Board.

Next FLTC meeting to be held on Thursday 23rd April, 2009 in room 116 at 9.00am.