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

FACULTY LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE
Thursday 3rd March 2011
held in room 116

MINUTES

Members
Dr Nigel Poole Chair
Dr D Tobin Defims
Dr M Jennings Development Studies
Dr G Dyer Economics
Mr P Kohler The School of Law
Dr R Bajpai Politics
Mr N Page Head of Registry
Ms Butool Ahmedar UG student rep
Ms Vasiliki Mavfroeidi PG student rep

In Attendance
Ms Sarah Spells Deputy Teaching and Research Support
Dr Jens Lerche Senior Lecturer in Development Studies
Dr Angus Lockyer Lecturer in the History of Japan (Senior Tutor capacity)
Dr Yuka Kobayashi Lecturer in China and International Politics
Ms Jan Dixon Quality Assurance Manager
Ms W Muoria-Sal Committee Secretary

44. Minutes:
44.1 The minutes of the last meeting held 20th January, 2011 were APPROVED.

45. Matters Arising:
45.1 Annual Programme Review: Minute item 33.1.2 referred: The Quality Assurance Manager tabled the revised paper on the new Annual Programme Review procedures. It was proposed that revisions would be implemented for the writing up of the 10/11 session. FLTC NOTED the timing of the production of data and its flow to tutors/convenors would be reviewed to ensure that it was well integrated into the overall procedure. A diagrammatic representation of the proposed review cycle was also tabled.

45.1.2 The FLTC members welcomed the proposal for better practice and were happy to recommend approval to Faculty Board. The AD noted that LTQC should be aware of the need for greater consideration at course level, although initially rejected it was felt that this should be reconsidered.

45.2 BA South Asian Studies and International Management (3 and 4 year programme) Minute Item 28.3 of 13th December and minute item 31.3.2 of 20th January meeting: Prof. Christine Oughton’s paper (appendix A) was received by the FLTC in response to request to see further information on academic coherence to support this programme –. FLTC welcomed this paper and were happy to approve the programme.

46. New and Amended Course Proposals – Appendix B:
46.1 The paper listing all the new and amended course proposals for next 11/12 - Appendix B, was tabled. The AD went through the paper and reported on the recommendations made at the pre-FLTC meeting. Two new programme proposals were also considered, one from Development Studies and another from Politics see item 47 below.

46.2 The Law representative raised the issue of standardised assessment mechanisms or allowing a range of assessment criteria. This was in reference to the recommendation made to the course amendment for ‘Justice, Reconciliation and Reconstruction in Post-Conflict Societies’ which was one of the course amendments considered; [from 100% unseen written paper to 100% 10,000 essay] the pre-FLTC meeting recommended a mixture of 70/30. FLTC noted that the tutor had previously tried other types of assessments and was not happy with the recommendation. After further consideration from the committee, it was felt that although there was a normal expectation, it was clear that the amendment had carefully been thought through. All that was required was further expansion to the rationale of the amendment. It was noted that there is not regulatory requirement, innovative assessment procedures would be welcomed, and that FLTC did not wish to constrain academic freedom, but promote good practice.

46.3 ACTION: FLTC noted all the recommendations made to all the new and amended courses and were happy to recommend APPROVAL to the Faculty Board.

47. New Programme Proposals:
47.1 FLTC CONSIDERED action taken by the preliminary FLTC sub-committee for the following two programmes:
   - MSc Labour Social Movements and Development
   - MSc Politics of China

47.2 MSc Labour Social Movements and Development:
47.2.1 AD first started by welcoming this programme and commended the thoroughness in which it had been presented. Dr Lerche from the Development Studies Department attended the meeting and spoke to the new programme proposal. The Head of Registry also commented on the programme structure noting minor amendments. He also recommended that a separate proposal for the Dissertation element titled ‘Dissertation in Labour Social Movements and Development’ should be put forward which would only be available to students doing this programme. It was noted that students could do a dissertation on this subject but only students doing this MSc programme would get this unique title.

47.2.2 ACTION: New course proposal required for Dissertation in Labour Social Movements and Development. FLTC to recommend APPROVAL to Faculty Board.

47.3 As part of this new programme, the new course proposal entitled Labour, Social Movements and Development was also CONSIDERED. It was felt that the 20% for the examining methods pertaining to the group case study was too high and ran the risk of bringing down the bright students. The student rep also agreed with this comment. Dr Lerche explained the reason they went for the higher percentage was to ensure students took the group study aspect seriously. Recommendation was made to perhaps split the assessment to 10% peer observation and a 10% mark. Dr Lerche said that he would refer this recommendation back to the Department and report back to the next FLTC.

47.3.1 ACTION: FLTC happy to recommend APPROVAL to FACULTY BOARD subject to the recommendation made.

47.4 MSc Politics of China:
47.4.1 FLTC CONSIDERED the new MSc Politics of China programme. Dr Yuka Kobayashi from the Politics Department attended the meeting and spoke to the new programme proposal. FLTC NOTED there was a high demand for this type of programme as many students from LSE
were already auditing the existing courses on China taught in the Politics Department. It was noted that the programme would start in September 2011 with a target of around 7 however aiming for 20. The question was raised why the programme was offered as an MSc instead of an MA, Dr Kobayashi explained that the MSc was more appropriate. The MSc had three elements of subject uniqueness and that no other students could take these courses accept students taking this programme.

47.4.2 The Head of Registry recommended that for the Dissertation element a new course proposal should be put forward entitled ‘Dissertation in Politics of China’ which would only be available to students taking this programme. It was also noted that the convenor needed to complete the Programme Specification form.

47.4.3 **ACTION:** FLTC happy to recommend APPROVAL to Faculty Board subject to new course proposal for Dissertation in Politics of China and the completion of the programme specification form.

48. **Course assessment:**
This agenda item was **CONSIDERED** earlier under item 46.2 above.

49. **Postgraduate 2009/2010 Annual Programme Review:**
49.1 FLTC **CONSIDERED** the following APR’s by receiving a brief summary report from each member of the FLTC who were requested to report on APR’s other than their own.

49.2 **Centre for International Diplomacy:**
49.2.1 MA International Studies and Diplomacy: (Appendix E):

49.2.3 • It was noted that the number of student this session had almost doubled in number.
• Noted that due to student increase, additional academic and support staff were in the Faculty Plan.
• Course overviews very useful
• Students would like more:
  • interactive lectures
  • feedback on assessments
  • contact with tutors.
• Visiting Examiner:
  • Requested seeing a range of dissertations awarded distinction, not all.
  • There should be discretion with classification
  • Merits needed to have more stringent criteria
    • The Head of Registry commented that anonymity could be preserved in the student’s profile. FLTC also noted that ‘reverting’ to the ‘pass’ and ‘distinction’ only as stated was never the case. It was noted that the MERIT criteria had changed a few years ago.

49.2.4 **ACTION:** AD recommended that CISD take appropriate action for consideration raised in the VE report in section 3.

49.3 **DEFIMS:**
49.3.1 MSc Finance and Financial Law: (Appendix F)

49.3.2 • Noted improvement however questioned the lack of supporting data.
• Noted late application and visa problems
• 3.1 nothing in the actions to change the offer letter
• 4.1 Student feedback: it was felt that allegations here were not appropriate – the committee members were not overly impressed with the way this was written.
• Issue about text books. – Library representative mentioned that the Library had never
49.3.3 MSc International Management for Japan (Appendix G)

49.3.4
- FLTC were not happy with this APR report, it focused on things that had happened over the years, rather than just 09/10.
- 4.1 needed data with regards to student feedback, problems with accessing library materials etc.,
- 4.2 – 6.listed things going on over the years
- 7. Visiting Examiner’s request to receive samples of tutorial presentations at 10% was to be discouraged, as the School’s regulation stated that tutorials from 20% and over would be made available to VE.

AD noted that it would have been helpful to have basic quantitative data on the programme eg how many students.

ACTION: Department needed to liaise with Admissions Office with regards to Offer letter.

49.4. DEVELOPMENT STUDIES: (Appendix H and I)

49.4.1
- MSc Development Studies

49.4.2
- MSc Globalisation & Development

ACTION: Due to the absence of the member required to report on both of the Development Studies APRs. It was noted that FLTC would receive a report at the next FLTC meeting.

49.5 ECONOMICS: (Appendix J to P)

49.5.1
- MSc Development Economics
- MSc Economics with reference to Africa
- MSc Economics with reference to the Asia-Pacific Region
- MSc Economics with reference to the Middle East
- MSc Economics with reference to South Asia
- MSc Finance and Development
- MSc Political Economy of Development

FLTC NOTED that there were two general issues that stood out from all the MSc Economics APRs, which was the marking ranges re merits and also suggestion that 70’s, 80’s and 90’s should be considered.

Another common thread was
- Issue of similar questions turning up in exams and term assignments
- Very little on student feedback –
- Unsatisfactory plans for the academic year
- Marking was felt to be too lenient
- Access to staff needed to be improved, better office hours.
- Noted chaos during the exam period – one of the question paper had a missing page.

The FLTC noted that the AD was not happy with the very brief completion of some of the APRs – there was a lack of, information on quantitative data and it would have been helpful to have a fuller and thorough approach in completing these forms.

The student rep queried the rationale for marking of essays at eg 70 and 80 percent, however not reflected in the exams. AD – said that it was common to bunch up marks. However, query would be noted.

ACTION: AD Requested Departmental rep to follow-up with the Department. The APR needed basic quantitative data. It would be helpful to know why courses were going right.
49.6 POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
49.6.1 MSc Politics/MSc International Politics

49.6.2 ACTION: Due to the FLTC member required to report on the MSc Politics APRs having to leave early. It was noted that FLTC would receive a report at the next FLTC meeting.

49.7 The School of Law:
49.7.1 MA ICLS APRs:
49.7.2 The FLTC NOTED the following issues from the MA and LLM APRs.
   - Identification of noticeable recruitment of African students
     In fact in the School it is noted and being addressed.
   - MA and LLM distinctions
   - The anticipated closure of the library
   - Note the difficulties of BLE access
   - Comments on the new rubric noted
   - VE – problem with confirmed marks.
   - Data and comments specific to the programme will be welcome.
   - There was no policy for late comers and no shows.

49.7.3 AD reported that comments would be sent to the Department – otherwise report accepted.

49.7.4 It was NOTED that there were two outstanding APRs – Law: LLM and Defims: International Management MENA – due to delay of receipt of Visiting Examiners’ reports. These would be chased up and reviewed at the next FLTC meeting.

50. Courses and Programmes Office for SOAS:
50.1 FLTC CONSIDERED an initial draft discussion paper from the Head of Registry on forming a new Courses and Programmes Office with effect from 2011/12. He explained that this would be a virtual office rather than a physical office. It would be located in Registry under the direction of the Head of Registry. In order to make this possible, responsibility of some of the student-related tasks, dealt with by Registry, would be transferred from the Registry office to the Faculty Office.

50.1.1 FLTC noted that so far the other two Faculties were happy with this.

50.1.2 RB questioned whether communication between the Faculty and Registry would be hampered and that perhaps to avoid this, there should be UG and PG virtual representation from each Department.

50.1.3 ACTION: AD – welcomed comments and asked for further feedback by email before JFPP and LTQC met. WM to circulate paper to Heads of Department, Dean and Faculty Board for further CONSIDERATION.

51. Online coursework submission (OCS) Policy Agreement: (Appendix S)
51.1 FLTC CONSIDERED the online coursework submission paper presented by Mr Dave Martin the Project Leader for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. It was noted that this was a draft paper, not yet a policy, came out of discussions held between all three Faculties and the Academic Development Directorate Office.

51.1.1 The success of the re-launch in 2009-10 of the version 1 TURNITIN (TII) submission tool in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities was noted. A further small scale roll-out of version 2 of TII within the faculty was also noted. From this experience, voluntary use of OCS within the FAH had increased. FLTC acknowledged that the School was seeking to increase the use of TII
throughout the School. Although not mandatory, the need for expansion was being led by strong student demand. DM highlighted issues that needed to be standardised across the School such as the release of plagiarism detection results to students, – it was generally felt that this would not be a good idea.

51.1.2 ACTION: On behalf of the FLTC – AD thanked Dave Martin for the hard work that had gone into the OCS and recommended further consideration at departmental level. All comments should be fed back by email to Dave Martin. WM to circulate paper to Departments.

52. Suspension of Regulations:
52.1 FLTC CONSIDERED the request for suspension of regulations for the following students:
51.1.1 • Student number 020247476 - CeDep. – appendix T
51.1.2 • Student number 296599 – BSc Economics - appendix U
51.1.3 • Student number 100217186 – CeDep - tabled
51.1.4 • Student number 100271001 – CeDep - tabled

51.1.5 ACTION: FLTC were happy to approve the request for suspension of regulations. WM to report back to CeDep and BSc Economics.

52. Library Matters
52.1 FLTC RECEIVED verbal report that the main Library entrance would be opened on Monday 14th March, 2011. The third floor entrance would no longer be in use.

53. Rethinking the tutorial system at SOAS
53.1 FLTC CONSIDERED paper from Dr Angus Lockyer, Senior Tutor for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Dr Lockyer reported that in his new role as Senior Tutor he noted that the Personal Tutor system throughout the School has never worked properly. The reason for this was that it has never been mandatory. He referred to page 2 of the paper Proposal – second bullet point; - many students did not know the difference between personal tutor and undergraduate tutor. Dr Lockyer refereed to the diagram which he had tabled.

53.1.1 The Associate Dean reported that this had been seen already and considered at FB and some of the members were not in favour. However the Dean felt that this was down to poor performance in this area and should be pursued.

53.1.2 PK from Law rep.– reported that there was a system/software which assisted the Personal Tutor in knowing what to discuss with the students. Personal Adviser was a better term and in order for the PT to be effective, they would need to know the structure of the programme.

53.1.3 Student reps – thought that it was great idea however there was a lack of awareness from students and that maybe it should not be compulsory.

53.1.4 SS the Deputy Teaching and Research Support: welcomed the new proposal as many Law students usually went to see her and this would free up a lot of her time.

53.1.5 DT from Defims: was nervous of sanction as non-attendance could be down to many of the offices being closed which would not be the students fault.

53.1.6 RB from Politics: was also nervous of sanction – and queried whether undergraduate tutors would still be in place?

53.1.7 MJ from Development Studies: reported that Dev St were not be happy with the sanction. At the moment they had their own system of Year tutors which was working.
53.1.8 The Head of Registry reported that the other two Faculties welcomed this paper.

53.1.9 Dr Angus Lockyer said that it was important to present this positively. PK from Law rep.– reported that there was a system/software which assisted the Personal Tutor in knowing what to discuss with the students. Personal Adviser was a better term and in order for the PT to be effective, they would need to know the structure of the programme.

53.1.10 **ACTION:** FLTC welcomed the initiative, queried some of the detail, and noted that this consultation would be ongoing. Further consideration would be given to improving the Personal Tutoring system at Departmental and Faculty levels and reported to next FLTC in May.

54.1 **CeDep Regulations for Distance Learning:**  
54.1.1 FLTC RECEIVED verbal report from AD that he had seen and approved by Chair’s Action the updated CeDep regulations.

55. **Any Other Business:**  
55.1 AD reported on new ESRC-approved Doctoral Centre with other Bloomsbury Colleges: a new International Development PhD pathway which would require programme proposal Need to approve MSc programme International Development Research and one new course Development Research Methods to go with this programme.

55.1.1 The commitment has been to launch this in Sept. 2011.

55.1.2 AD requested committee to allow him to consult as Chair in order to accelerate the process to get it through. The committee were happy for this to go ahead.