UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**Staff-Student Liaison Committee: Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages**

A meeting was held on 31st October 2014 at 11am in RFB Room 326

Present: Professor Roberts (Chair), Mrs. Bachman (minutes), Ms. Bingham, Ms Conway, Ms. Deadman, Mr. Hicks, Ms. Klein, Mr. McKeegan, Ms. Monsalve, Ms. Pastorino, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Speed, Ms. Tudose & Professor Wilson

Apologies: Dr. Darlow & Dr. Jones

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record pending a change to the date the meeting took place.

**Matters Arising**

2. None.

**Student Matters**

**Background & Introduction to the SSLC**

3 RECEIVED: the Terms of Reference of the SSLC (SSLC/14-15/02).

4. RESOLVED: to approve the Terms of Reference pending the addition of the Library Representative to the list of members.

5. REPORTED: that Student Representatives were able to contact the CUSU Education Officer (Rob Richardson) for support in their roles.

**MML Part I**

Online Timetable

6. REPORTED: that use of the online timetable should be explained more clearly, and should include instructions on adding events for a specific language class group.

7. REPORTED: that all incoming first year students received a leaflet provided by the developers of the online timetable at the introductory meeting

8. RESOLVED: to consider circulating more detailed information, with specific reference to the MML implementation of the timetable at the start of the academic year.

Reading Lists

9. REPORTED: that students had requested that reading lists be split into, for example, Michaelmas Term reading, Lent Term reading, etc.

10. REPORTED: that students had raised concerns that lecture topics and supervision topics were sometimes out of synch.

11. REPORTED: that both of these concerns were general, rather than specific.

12. RESOLVED: to request information relating to specific papers and to circulate this information to Heads of Departments for consideration.

Circulation of language class lists

13. REPORTED: that language class lists were published towards the end of week 1 and should be published earlier.

14. REPORTED: that in some cases the production of these lists was dependent upon the results of diagnostic tests being undertaken by students.

15. RESOLVED: to attempt to publish these lists earlier in future.

Lectures/Lecture Block

16. REPORTED: that students had experienced problems with lecture accommodation, for example with clashes and inappropriately sized rooms being booked.

17. REPORTED: that computer equipment in the Lecture Block was inadequate.

18. REPORTED: that the Faculty shared the concerns of students relating to room bookings and were taking measures to address these problems with the appropriate departments within the University.

19. REPORTED: that work was underway to install networked computers throughout the Lecture Block.

Year Abroad Lecture

20. REPORTED: that students had requested that the Year Abroad presentation be brought forward from the beginning of the Michaelmas Term of the IB year to the Easter Term of the IA year.

21. RESOLVED: to forward this request to the Director of the Year Abroad for consideration.

**MML Part II**

Online timetable

22. REPORTED: that students had requested that the online timetable be available in a Monday to Friday format (rather than the Thursday to Wednesday format used currently).

23. RESOLVED: to forward this request to the developers of the Online Timetable for consideration.

Course Structure

22. REPORTED that there was a concern about the number of contact hours for language teaching. Students would like more focus on language learning and an opportunity to study interpreting. Students reported that the length of the oral examination (15 minutes) was insufficient to show the level of language ability they had reached during the Year Abroad.

23. REPORTED: that language teaching provision would reviewed during 2015-16.

24. RESOLVED: that concerns over the duration of the oral examination would be considering during the review of language teaching.

25. REPORTED: that the provision of teaching of interpreting would present some difficulties as dedicated staff would be need to be recruited in order to offer this, and that it should only be offered if the qualification achieved were recognized by organization such as the United Nations or the European Commission.

26. RESOLVED: that the request for the teaching of interpreting would be considered during the language teaching review.

MPhil in Translation

27. REPORTED: that students requested that the possibility of offering an MPhil in Translation be considered.

28. REPORTED: that the issues related to offering such an MPhil were similar to those as for the provision of courses in interpreting.

29. RESOLVED: to forward this request on to the Graduate Studies Committee for consideration.

Year Abroad Project Guidelines

30. REPORTED: that the Year Abroad Project handbook contained errors and inconsistencies, particularly in relation to the use of style guides.

31. REPORTED: that the content of the Year Abroad Project handbook and the Optional Dissertation handbook were currently being reviewed by the USC.

**Linguistics Part I**

Size of supervision groups

32. REPORTED: that one third of the Part I students had expressed concerns over the size of supervision groups, i.e. that they were too large and that some students felt unable to participate in discussions.

33. REPORTED: that having smaller groups would result in there being fewer supervisions. The issue had been raised in the past and a vote resolved that students preferred to have more supervisions in larger groups.

34. REPORTED: that the Undergraduate Coordinator for the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics would be contacting all Part I paper coordinators to ask that they ensure that the supervisors for those papers were being as inclusive as possible and encouraging all students to join in discussions.

**Linguistics Part II**

Student Participation

35. REPORTED: that support was needed by student reps in order to engage with their constituent students and communicate with them effectively.

36. REPORTED: that the Faculty Office staff were able to assist with room bookings, email communications, etc. Student reps could also contact College DoS’s for support.

Use of Camtools

37. REPORTED: that not all lecturers were uploading their lecture notes to CamTools.

38. REPORTED: that individual lecturers have their own style of instructing and that students to speak directly to their lecturers regarding their concerns.

39. RESOLVED: to report these concerns to the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics.

Books in Library

40. REPORTED: that some students had experienced problems accessing books in the Library but that this issue had subsequently been resolved.

41. REPORTED: that the Library was aware of these concerns.

**MPhil EuroLit/MPhil Screen Media**

Screen Media reading lists

42. REPORTED: that students had experienced problems with reading lists and materials published on CamTools. It was noted that there had been some late changes to compulsory reading material. It was also noted that some lists were circulated by email and some via CamTools and that students had requested that only CamTools were used.

43. REPORTED: that as a result of some new appointments late changes had been made to reading lists (although as a rule this practice was discouraged). The Graduate Administrator was working with Library staff on the provision of reading material.

EuroLit

44. REPORTED: that students were concerned about the level of contact time and that the two-hour seminar sessions on alternate weeks were not sufficient to prepare students for submission of assessed essays, and in particular that there was not sufficient time for discussion.

45. REPORTED: that the seminars are not wholly geared towards essay preparation, and that students are further allocated two hours of supervisions for the core course essay, which has generally been considered sufficient provision in previous years.

46. RESOLVED: to report these concerns to teaching staff leading these seminars.

47. RESOLVED: that students should receive detailed guidance regarding the core course essay from their supervisor. Further, students may meet with the MPhil Course Director should they wish to discuss any issues in detail. Concerns regarding the balance between narrative and class discussion would be raised directly with teaching staff leading these seminars and staff should consider allowing MPhil students to book rooms for additional after class discussions.

Methodology Session

48. REPORTED: that students had asked whether it would be possible to have a seminar on research methodology in preparation for the core course essay.

49. REPORTED: that students were able to contact either their supervisor or DoS for this guidance.

50. RESOLVED: to forward the request to the Graduate Studies Committee for consideration when future provision has been determined.

Late changes to seminar schedules

51. REPORTED: that the scheduling of seminars had been changed with little notice.

52. REPORTED: that this was not standard practice and that efforts would be made to ensure that this did not happen again.

**MPhil Linguistics**

Funding deadlines for International students

53. REPORTED: that international non-EU students had very little time to submit their funding applications.

54. RESOLVED: to report this matter to the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics with a request to adjust the Research Methods seminar series to allow for more time.

Deadline for seminar choices

55. REPORTED: The representative stated that students would like more time to consider their seminar choices.

56. RESOLVED: to pass this request on to the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics for consideration.

**PhD**

Personal Development Plan Forms

57. REPORTED: that the PDP forms no longer provided students with the opportunity to provide (anonymous) feedback on support offered by supervisors.

58. REPORTED: that the Faculty provides different methods of feedback in order that that issues could be resolved swiftly and informally. Students were also able to contact their College Graduate Tutor or Advisor for advice and support on this issue.

59. REPORTED: that the Graduate Studies Committee was considering whether students would be assigned one or two Advisors, in addition to the main supervisor

*[Post-meeting note: the Graduate Studies Committee agreed that the supervisory team would consist of one Advisor in addition to the main supervisor.]*

Supervising Opportunities

60. REPORTED: that students were unclear where to look for supervision opportunities and that students who had studied in the Faculty previously (i.e. as MPhil students) were at an advantage when supervisors were recruited.

61. REPORTED: that the method of recruitment of supervisors varied from department to department. Students should contact the course coordinators within a department or individual college tutorial offices about supervision opportunities.

**General Board Learning and Technology Review of the Faculty 2014/15**

62. REPORTED: that the Faculty would be undergoing a General Board Learning and Teaching Review during 2014-15. The Faculty's written submission (self-evaluation document) would be made at the end of the Michaelmas Term 2014. The Review Committee would visit the Faculty on 2 March 2015 to meet with staff and students. Student representatives would be invited to comment on the submission when a draft was available for circulation around the 25 November. Student representatives were asked to ensure that their constituent students were aware the review was taking place.

**Space**

63. RECEIVED: the summary data of the surveys of the space needs of:

1. Undergraduate students (SSLC/14-15/03(a))
2. MPhil students (SSLC/14-15/03(b))
3. PhD students (SSLC/14-15/03(c)).

64. REPORTED: that the results would be analysed during the course of 2014/15, including both the comments and responses to the open-ended questions received.

65. REPORTED: that the Graduate Centre and the Call Centre were underused and could be considered for repurposing.

66. REPORTED: that PhD students would prefer to have some office-style space, although it was acknowledged that this was impractical.

67. RESOLVED: that the whereabouts of locker space and how to use lockers should be publicized.

68. RESOLVED: that the student representatives would consider the content of the documents and request feedback from their constituencies.

**Graduate Training Programme**

69. REPORTED: that graduate students who signed up for courses on the graduate training programme should inform the coordinator if they were unable to attend in order that places may be offered to students on waiting lists.

**Moodle Feedback**

70. REPORTED: that the Faculty was introducing the use of Moodle, a virtual learning environment, and that four courses were running sites on Moodle (ITA1, FRC2, Fr1,and Ge1). Moodle will replace CamTools in October 2016. Any feedback on the use of Moodle would be welcomed.

**Green issues**

71. REPORTED: that the Faculty would be actively participating in the University’s “Switch Off Week” and that students were encouraged to make suggestions on green issues, either by using the Suggestions Box in the first floor lobby of the RFB, or by contacting one of the two student representatives on the Faculty’s Green Impact Team (Anthony Wheeler and Emily Postles).

There being no further business the meeting ended at 12:30 p.m.