

PGSSLC Minutes

Spring Term, Meeting 1

Thursday 26th January 2023

Chair: Grace Rhyne

Minutes: Ruth Walbank

In attendance: Ross Forman (Director of Graduate Studies), Michael Meeuwis (Convenor MA in English Literature), Dan Katz (Convenor MA in Critical and Cultural Theory), Sarah Akhtaruzzaman (Subject Librarian), and Charlotte Pearce (Widening Participation Officer)

Apologies: Paulo de Medeiros (Convenor MA in World Literature), Tess Grant (Convenor MA in English and Drama), Kimberley Richardson (World Literature), Chris Foley (English), Nate Cope (English and Drama), and Kishan Katira (Critical and Cultural Theory)

1. Introduction of new PGSSLC Representatives and Subject Librarian

SA introduced themselves as the new subject librarian for the English department and invites both staff and students to send over book requests and feedback, maintaining open communication between the library and department.

Action point: Set up a meeting with Sarah and the student reps (RW)

2. PGT Matters

KR sent some collated PGT student concerns ahead of the meeting for discussion. PGT students are concerned over the upcoming UCU strikes and how it will impact their performance in assessments with a lack of seminars, especially due to the intensity of the strikes.

DK highlighted that UCU would host events like teach-ins during the strikes and suggested the PGT reps share these events with students.

RF raised that students could meet in non-teaching spaces such as cafes or bars to still discuss the text's that week without crossing the picket line. Communicating virtually (via group chats, for instance) may also help.

Action point: PGT reps to share this information with students (KR, CF, NC, KK)

3. PGR Matters

RW asked if there were any updates on the online feedback form for students to submit ideas/concerns on the PGSSLC webpage agreed from last meeting.

GR confirmed that TG and GR had scheduled a meeting in w/c 30th January to build the form.

4. Any other business

a) Appoint MA TALC representative

No MA representatives were present, so no appointment was made

b) Discussion of new MA PGSSLC applicants

GR noted that the online PGSSLC application form had received two new applications and asked whether the committee would like them to join.

RF said that the form has now closed but that inviting more student voices to the committee would be a welcome addition.

Action point: Invite the new PGT representatives to join the committee (GR & RW).

c) PG Symposium volunteers

RF asked for a confirmed date, ideally in-line with the Faculty of Arts festival in May.

CP offered to help the volunteers find rooms for the symposium once the date has been confirmed.

RW asked if the invite for volunteers had been sent to the department's postgraduate students.

Action points: Confirm if invite has been sent out to PGT and PGR students (RF) and confirm a date for the symposium (RW).

d) Feedback on administrative process

RF asked PGT reps to ask students for feedback on the dissertation forms process, highlighting that some tutors were in higher demand than others to act as dissertation supervisors. RF also highlighted that the PGR termly review forms were sent out this week and that these need to be completed in a timely fashion.

Action points: PGT reps to ask students for feedback on dissertation forms (KR, CF, NC, KK) and PGR reps to encourage everyone to fill out their autumn term review by the deadline (GR & RW).

e) Board of Graduates representative

Action point: RW to attend Board of Graduates meeting as PGR representative.

f) Next meeting

Action point: Send out a poll for the next PGSSLC meeting time (GR & RW)