

PGSSLC Meeting | 06-12-2021 | Term One, 21/22

Online

Start Time: 13:57

Chair: Esthie Hugo

End Time: 14:39

Minutes: Christopher Griffin

In Attendance: Liz Barry, Charlotte Pearce, Ross Forman, Stephen Purcell, Michael Gardiner, Esthie Hugo, Emma Francis, Christopher Griffin, Aiman Khattak.

Absent: Nick Lawrence (Accepted), Sian Moore (Tentative), Kate Courage (Tentative), Heather Pilbin (Tentative).

Meeting

News - PGRs

Esthie: Many PGRs are on-track for their expected hand-in time; we can expect two hand-ins in January/February of 2022, with the rest thereafter. Most are feeling confident.

Esthie: Students have some concerns and qualms about departmental teaching, particularly that they are only able to begin teaching during their second year as PGRs.

Liz Barry: It may be worth chasing up Professor Paul Botley, who may be able to help address these concerns and qualms.

Esthie: There is registered interest from multiple parties in undertaking the position of PGSSLC chair, which is good.

PG Symposium

Esthie: Regarding the PG Symposium, we should begin discussing when, where, and how this will happen.

Ross: Based on discussions last year, we should try and hold the symposium during The Cadre Festival, whenever that takes place.

Emma: If we don't have exams in the summer, could we move the symposium to later? If it has to be Term 3 (Ross), potentially end of May/beginning of June?

Aiman and Esthie: Supports the idea of late May/early June.

Esthie: Will get back to committee after talking to Emma about the possibility of late May/early June.

Esthie: Turnout from PGRs, both as attendees and as presenters, was pretty low last year. How can we encourage PGR involvement in this year's symposium?

_____: PGRs chairing panels could increase their involvement in the event itself. Consensus that this is a good idea.

Michael, Liz, et al.: A sense of physical presence will be a significant factor.

Ross: The situation with Omicron could impact a physical event.

Chris & Michael: Perhaps worth exploring the possibility of a hybrid event - both digital and in-person.

Liz: The Ramphal Portal could be a candidate for a hybrid event - it was previously used by IATL for similar purposes.

Charlotte: The room booking form for Terms 2/3 has been released today, so we'll want to get our skates on if we want to book certain rooms for certain dates.

Esthie: Will get back to us all about this.

Chris: Suggests the possibility of having a lottery, akin to what conferences such as [BritGrad](#) have done in previous years; those presenting papers at conference are entered into a lottery and one of them will win a voucher for a specific university press (10% off, etc.) or a bundle of books featuring the latest Shakespeare scholarship from that year *or* a bundle of books from a specific press. We could perhaps do something similar or on a smaller scale as a bit of fun for presenters and to encourage involvement.

Ross: We should explore the international links that we have departmentally and institutionally in promoting the event and seeking participants; we have the [Monash-Warwick Alliance](#) as well as the [EUTOPIA](#) project. We could open up paper submissions from these other partner universities or perhaps have a panel focused on our international networks and partnerships.

Esthie: Agrees that this is a great idea and something we have done, to good effect, in previous years.

Michael: Notes that communication will be important for the event, a simple point but one easily overlooked. Encourages the promotion of the event in PGT and PGR circles.

Esthie: Agrees with this point, noting that last year's turnout indicates that PGTs are aware of the conference.

Ross: Suggests that it would be worth flagging at future events with PGRs and PGTs in the new year/Term 2.

Chris: Notes that Dr Douglas' support sessions last year, particularly the one focused on writing a conference proposal, were helpful and would be worth continuing in the run-up to this year's symposium, if possible.

Ross: Agrees with this point and flags that Dr Din-Kariuki will be running a session for one of the PG Hangouts focused on this subject, later this academic year.

MA Supervisions and Dissertations

Ross: Raises the subject of MA dissertations and ensuring that PGTs are aware that they need to start thinking about generating their proposals. Also flags the less-than-forthcoming communications from the SU, who are yet to inform ECLS about who the student representatives are.

Emma: Regarding dissertations, there could be some issues with communication. Some PGTs are convinced that they get to pick their dissertation supervisor which, where possible, is true, but they may not be aware that this will depend on 'workload point'. Reiterating to students that they should consider multiple prospective supervisors would be worthwhile. Colleagues are concerned that encouraging discussions about a possible supervision are being erroneously read as firm commitments.

Esthie: Will contact MA convenors to ensure any miscommunication or potential miscommunication is cleared up.

Departmental Subject Specialisms and Supervisions

Ross: Thinks it might be a good idea to create a centralised, searchable roster of academics and subject specialisms in the department, so those seeking supervisors (PGT/PGR) can efficiently and easily identify who might be worth contacting further to discuss possible supervision.

Michael: Concurr with Ross. It is a shame that there are MAs who leave the department and pursue research elsewhere without perhaps knowing the research specialisms that the department is host too.

Unfortunately, at this juncture, due to technical difficulties, Esthie disappears into the ether.

Charlotte: Flags that the staff pages can be helpful in this regard.

Michael: These pages need to be updated but could be helpful alongside a single, accessible space in which people can readily find out the relevant information.

Ross: Any Other Business?

Chris: Flags that, as the Student Advisory Forum (SAF) representative for the University of Warwick within M4C, he has access to a small pool of money for social events. He will look into organising a social event with this funding, open to all PGRs, in the new Faculty of Arts building in the post-New Years, mid-winter bleakness (early Feb). He will make the department aware of this if an event is going ahead, in order to flag amongst research students.

Ross: Suggests flagging this, too, with supervisees based at other M4C universities but who are also supervised at Warwick.

Chris: Thinks this is a great idea - will liaise with Ross and Graeme about this as and when the event is being organised.

All in attendance: Wish to extend an enormous thank you to Esthie for her work as the PGSSLC chair and wish her all the very best for her new post, starting in January.

Meeting ends.