

PGR (MRes/PhD) GRADUATE STAFF-STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

For the Graduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee Meeting held on
15 January 2019

MINUTES

Present:

Student Reps: Cora Neumann (Chair), Alejandra Martinez (secretary), Katherine Brooke, Omiros Kouvavas.

Staff: Jeremy Smith, Robin Naylor, Maryanne Heafey, Natalie Devon, Manuel Bagues, Helen Riley, Sharun Mukand.

Apologies

Antonio Schiavonne, [Bhaskar Dutta](#), Sharun Mukand, Kathryn Nicholson, Kelly Taylor, Stephanie Redding, Srinjoy Sen.

1. Minutes of the meeting 27 November 2018

Minutes were read and approved.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 Lecture Capture:

Katherine Brooke asked regarding the possibility for lecture capture in the MRes classes. Maryanne Heafey says that it is not possible to do this in the MRes program for several reasons. First, the small number of the students attending the lectures, and second the rooms used for the classes are unsuitable.

Adding to the discussion, Prof Jeremy Smith indicated that Professors teaching on the MRes did not support the provision of lecture capture for MRes modules, as the classes are small and there is plenty of opportunity to ask questions.

2.2 On food services:

Professor Costas asks if students of the program can help in providing some solutions regarding the food services on campus.

Student representative Cora Neumaan indicated she will take upon the task, she will take a poll among the MRes and PhD students in order to gather opinions regarding food on campus and some possible solutions. Professor Sharun Mukand pointed out that the competition that the different food suppliers have on campus should be used in favour of obtaining the best quality.

Professor Jeremy Smith will be informed of the students' answers on the future poll and student feedback.

3. Teaching and Learning

3.1 Module Evaluation (term 1)

Maryanne talked about the module evaluation results: feedback on EC9A1 given by the year 1 MRes students was done before the end of the class and she was puzzled by the negative comments from the students regarding assessment, which had not taken place by the time of the module feedback exercise.

Student representative Katherine Brooke on this matter, indicated that students from the year 1 struggle to complete the course problem sets during classes. Students say they cannot fully finish all the coursework on time and as a result they feel behind.

In addition to Module evaluation Professor Jeremy Smith also highlights the small percentage of students responding to the module feedback. He asks the students' representatives to promote the feedback within their cohorts. Professor Robyn Naylor also suggested that when the next module evaluation is launched that student representatives also email students through the GSSLC email account, to take part.

3.2 Applied econometrics

Concerning the lack of applied econometrics taught in the MRes year 1 courses, student representative Alejandra Martinez, pointed out that this lack of knowledge is affecting students' understanding in the modules on the second year, and so asked the department if there is a possible solution for this problem, specifically to students that want to continue in research in applied econometrics.

Student representative Omiros Kouvas, noted that in previous years of the MRes programme, the module EC9A1 Advanced Econometrics had a session for the applied part. Professor Sharun Mukand indicated that the department will start to figure out a possible solution that fits the students and the department's objectives. He argues that the limited time students in the PhD track have is binding and that the department should plan to teach students tools that are going to be more useful for their future research. The fact that the course is highly theoretical might be impractical in terms of the time restriction students have and not many students will pursue the theoretical path.

Professor Jeremy Smith added that teachers on the subject EC9AA the research method course taken by year 1 MRes students are not precisely applied professors, in case of trying to add this applied knowledge in this course.

In the short-run, the solution for the next cohort of students is the master class on causal inference, which will take place in the university in the third term.

Professor Manuel Bagues, notes this is not a unique problem for this program, but is the

case of other economics doctoral programs, which is solved in a second course given in the second year for students interested in acquiring the applied knowledge.

3.3 Deadlines on Assessments Feedback.

One assessment marking deadline (EC9A2) had been missed in autumn term but due to ill health of the lecturer, this would be condoned by the University.

4. Library Issues

4.1 New library

Staff representative of library, Helen Riley updated staff and student representatives on the future plan for expanding the library. Although this would not happen for another 10 years, she encouraged students and professors to fill-out the enquiries on what adjustments and improvements could be made to the existing library. The problem of the lack of study spaces will be partly addressed in the short term as improvements will be made to provide 300 more places and study desks over the next few months.

4.2 Lending books

On the past matter raised by the MRes year 1 students, regarding the short time-span of book lending for MRes students compared to PhD, Helen is still waiting for an answer from Library Management. She will forward this as soon as she gets a response.

4.3 Small capacity on the Post-grad hub

Student representative Katherine Brooke on the shortage of spaces in the Post-grad hub. Helen Riley in regard to this matter says there is a possibility that in long term it gets reallocated in the sports center.

4.4. Spaces for networking PhD students

Helen Riley highlights to staff, professors and student representatives the available spaces the library gives to postgraduate students in PhD programs to network. She points to the Research network which happens every Thursday in term time. This is a space in which students can engage with other members of the University and discuss their research over tea and coffee.

A final note on Helen is always to contact her if any library issues arise.

5. Computing Issues

5.1 Server with Interactive usage

Professor Jeremy Smith coming back to this issue, raised by student representative Kathryn Nicholson on the last GSSLC meeting. It may be possible to open the interactive use of the server, for the new users. However he highlights that the problem of users occupying too much space when using the interactive scheme might lessen the server's efficiency for the other users. It is also the case that if providing the interactive use, the initial members might need to be readjusted as they will need to set the system entirely.

6. Assessment and Feedback

Issues related are discussed in 3.1 and 3.3.

7. Student Support and Guidance

None

8. Diversity and Inclusion

8.1 Women economist lunches

Student representative Katherine Brooke, wants to ask about the Women economist lunches. Professor Jeremy Smith will ask on this regards to Lisa Hayes. She might send out a circular of any interest on this possible activity in the future. Maryanne Heafey to follow-up on this matter.

9. Any other business

None