

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

Meeting held on 11th March 2020

MINUTES

Attended: Cora Neumann, Keremcan Gey, Nick Scholz, Ashley Lucia, Jeremy Smith, Maryanne Heafey, Edoardo Tolva, Antonio Schiavone

Apologies: Robin Naylor, Kelly Taylor, Helen Riley, Shrinjoy Sen, Sharun Mukand, Stephanie Redding.

1. Minutes of the meeting held 15th January 2020

Communication Training for Staff, discussed in the GSSLC meeting in November, was meant to be held this Friday (13th of March). Due to a crisis in UCL, it is postponed to June.

2. Matters Arising

a. Coronavirus:

What is guidance for if UK is hit harder?

Contingency plans are drafted within the university and the department level.

A meeting will be held this week, on how to conduct teaching and exams in case of shutdown.

This includes term 3, summer and term 1 (2020-21)

Further guidance will be distributed once they are set.

Concerns were stated by the student representatives because we are exposed during invigilation and TA duties.

Some students are worried about the prospects of coming back into the UK.

Will there be quarantines or travel restrictions?

The Administration stated that these situations will be counted as mitigating circumstances for administrative purposes.

b. Metrics Macro Course in Term 2

First year representative raised concerns about the confusion about the distinction between metrics and macro topics because they are taught by the same lecturer. This is problematic also because in some weeks, 4 hours of the same module is covered, making keeping up materials very hard.

The administration stated that the schedule in the timetable is to be followed. Next year this is resolved by chance, as Giovanni will be on leave.

3. Teaching and Learning

EC9AA

The updated guidance is sent out and is on the webpage. Members of the faculty will be asked to publish the list of projects to be offered to the students.

Grading

Students asked for when the summer examination schedule will be published, for the student to arrange their travels about when to be here in the UK for marking and grading.

15 of April is the tentative date for the publication of the finalised exam timetable.

In case of disruption due to Coronavirus, the assignments will be submitted online anyway.

Optional Modules for Year 2:

A meeting will be held for students and members of faculty to talk about second year modules.

This meeting will be by faculty teaching this year

Afterwards, by the end of May, preferences of the students will be asked. No new modules can be set up for next year. If the content of the module is to be altered, that is possible.

4. Library Issues

Ms Riley asked to be made aware of books that are missing in the library (also in case of a mismatch with the records and physical copies)

5. Computing Issues

No issues were raised.

6. Assessment and Feedback

PTES is opening on week 1 of term 3.

Module evaluations are still going on. Open until 11:30 pm 15th March. Cora (Chair) noted that TA's also find feedback useful. But response rate from undergrads are usually poor. This year, message should be sent to undergraduates to compel them to fill.

This is an important part of the teaching portfolio.

Information: Typically, UG 1st year starts at 60% response, falls by 50, 40. MSc is typically around 50%

7. Student Support and Guidance

Funding: Clarification requested on people in older cohorts that have 3-year stipends and 3.5-year stipends

As in previous years, department will support 4th year students without funding to match 10k (for the full academic year) or 50% of this for those with external funding for 3.5 years.

It was also asked about the ESRC people that only gained a tuition scholarship.

The department tops the stipend to match. It needs to be checked, but probably the 10k will be matched again in the final year.

An email will be sent to the 3rd year students with relevant information about what will happen.

8. Student Engagement and Voice

PRES focus group arrangement:

The Chair stated that there is not much interest in the focus group, and those who have interest, because they are living in London, it has not been possible to coordinate the meeting.

It will probably be easier to arrange via a doodle in term 3 as then no one is teaching. The administration has the idea of setting a meeting that will be announced so that people anyone who may be interested, to drop in and participate.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

Fussball Table:

Some feeling of segregation is felt by student because of the common room given back to students. Cookies in the kitchen was moved to senior room.

The stress relief plan included it.

Some negative feelings are around.

Administration:

-Biscuits will be put in PhD room.

-A member of staff had brought in a table football set and placed this in the senior common room. However, it has not been widely used in its current location, so it will be moved to another place in the department to see if it is better used.

The student representative stated that there are negative feelings about the following issue: The research away day was mentioned in the newsletter that is also sent to PhD students. However, the event was not available for the attendance of PhD students.

Response: The invitation is to be solved. The emails and newsletters mention the events that we are not actually invited to (junior faculty meeting)

This communication should be made clearer. PhD students, as future researchers, should be invited to those events.

Athena Reward and Bronze reward

The Athena SAT group needs 2 (ideally one PhD one MRes) representatives → time commitment will be looking at documents produced, contributing to documents, sitting in hour long meetings every month (summer months as well) until November

A general email will be sent

10. Any other business

What are the rules for long medical absence?

If long medical related absences are to occur, will students still receive their stipend?

The University changed the policy recently, so that where a student needs to temporarily withdraw due to health, the first 13 week of sick leave will be covered by the stipend.

If due to health, research is done but you cannot be in the department, a change of place of study can be managed by the department.

Note that things might change due to coronavirus.

Next meeting: Apr 29