

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

For the Graduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee Meeting held on
27th November 2019

MINUTES

Present: Cora Neumann, Nick Scholz, Keremcan Gey, Srinjoy Sen, Jeremy Smith, Kelly Taylor, Maryanne Heafey, Bozena Beauclair,

Apologies: Helen Riley, Manuel Bagues

1. Matters Arising

No new matters arising

2. Teaching and Learning

- A) Bozena Beauclair (Marketing and Communications Manager) presented proposals for signage in the new student spaces and asked for student input to the project. Designer company's proposal slides were examined, these included the following suggestions:
- Visual concepts to walls, that will be similar in design to the featured Wall in the Foyer.
 - The walls can hold inspirational quotes
 - Glass doors will have the names of Offices on them, we may have banners next to the doors
 - The renovations will take only hours and will not disturb workflow for days.

Soliciting our inspirational quotes: (student suggestions for quotes)

- General email will be sent (Cora will collect them)
- Or we can have an ideas box

B) Feedback from 1st years:

The first-year rep reported that students feel having more than one lecturer in each module might be inefficient, because of problems with getting used to the lecturer and getting used to again were discussed. However, as Head of Department indicated, there is no demand from members of faculty to teach longer than 15 hours per module (from teaching evaluation). The problem is in both coherence of material in terms of material and in teaching style.

The administration stated that the material is designed and supervised in terms of being transferable and comparable to other graduate programmes

C) Applied econometrics course in EC9AA this year:

Manuel will deliver the course and topics will include application of identification and causal models (and maybe RDD). It will be made available to everyone (ie all PhD students). It will consist of 6 or 4 x 2-hour sessions (probably 8 hours in total). It was agreed that there is value in bringing everyone to the same level in knowledge of identification before the summer project.

- D) There is concern from the first years that there are only 3 days between the last lecture and the midterm exams, but it is agreed that there should be no exam at the end of vacation

The administration indicated that exams were moved to December in response to previous years student feedback that students did not want to spend vacation revising for exams in January. In 2020-21, exams will be split between December and January (with one exam carried forward to January), to reduce the revision burden in December.

- E) Because macro has the same weight for the final and midterm, at least a past year exam must be made available to the 1st years

Problem sets had been made available to the students in order to give them feedback on their performance. However, these were not marked. Maryanne Heafey would speak to the module leader to ensure that arrangements are in place for these problem sets to be marked in 2020-21 and for students to receive this feedback.

3. Library Issues

There were no issues.

4. Computing Issues

MRes students appreciate the efforts made by the administration and IT to ensure that all computers in MRes Rooms are in working condition.

5. Assessment and Feedback

a. Module Evaluation is currently open (until Dec 8). Completion of module evaluation is a monitoring point, which everyone is expected to complete.

→The module evaluations of MRes 1st year cohort last year raised concerns about having the first form of feedback in the Macroeconomics module as the midterm exam, which has an overall weight of 50%. This means there is very little room left for the student to recover after the moment they can realise that they are lagging behind.

To ameliorate this issue, graded problem sets were suggested. However, this suggestion is not being implemented in this year's module (see 2E above).

→ In response to a question from GSSLC Chair Cora Neumann; it was clarified that late submissions will be penalized by 5% point reduction per day.

6. Student Support and Guidance

Newly appointed Well-being Officer: She is there for any wellbeing needs. Wiji Arulampalam is appointed as the Wellbeing Officer.

7. Student Engagement and Voice

Lucia Ashley is appointed as the Student engagement coordinator (for all Postgraduate students). Her duties include planning activities and she is a point of contact to arrange activities such as employment opportunities or wider community engagement activities. She will be a member of the GSSLC.

8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

- A) Women in Economics event was well received and well attended. Student participants looked forward to there being an event per term. There were issues submitted to the head of the department, relating to the language sometimes used in the department. As a result there will be compulsory sessions for all academic staff (Phd students advised to participate) within department, on use of language in professional communications (date will be announced).
- B) There are concerns regarding people being vulnerable to intruders while they are in the department working late and on weekdays. This is compounded by the incidences of theft and unsettling encounters that occur around the campus. To remedy this issue, there is a plan to lock the department doors which will ask for authorized card access to get into the department after 7pm and 7am and weekends. The department is waiting on the approval of university body governing such issues.
- C) One-minute videos on respect, diversity, equality and gender will be created where members of the department talk for one minutes about what these words mean to them.
-The Department is looking for volunteers to appear on video and talk about what respect means to them in the department. Interested people should contact Kelly Taylor (Head of Administration, Teaching and Learning).
- D) The department plans to apply to Athena bronze award in Nov 2020. To inform the application as survey of staff and PhD students will take place early in 2020. There is also a Warwick Pulse survey in early Dec this year. The departmental survey will follow the latter.

9. Any Other Business

No other business items.

Next Meeting: 15th January 2019