

GRADUATE STAFF-STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

For the Graduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee Meeting to be held on
Wednesday 2nd December 2020

Attendees

Staff representatives:

Jennifer Smith	Director of Studies
Alex Karalis Isaac	Deputy Director PGT programmes (Academic Convenor)
Helen Riley	Library Representative
Lucia Ashley	Student Engagement and Experience Coordinator
Stephanie Redding	Senior Careers Consultant

Student Representatives:

James Clarke	MSc Econ (Chair)
Arushi Nautiyal	MSc EIFE (Secretary)
Kashish Kaur	MSc Econ
Sushil Mathew	MSc Econ
Haoran Wang	MSc Econ
Ziyan Ma	MSc EIFE
Ethan McQuaid	MSc BES (Economics Track)
Ayush Shastry	MSc BES (Science Track)

Apologies

Jeremy Smith	Head of Department
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1. Membership of the Committee

- The first meeting led by the new chair (James Clarke) where he welcomed the two new student representatives, Sushil Mathew (MSc Econ) and Haoran Wang (MSc Econ)

2. Declarations of interest

- No conflict of interest

3. Resources (Library/IT)

- Helen Riley provided updates on the Library preparation for the holiday season. Advised the SSLC to inform students to lookout for the emails that contain all details.
- The library will mostly be open during the public holidays except for on Christmas and New Years
- Updates: Two new references
 - i. Free postal book loan for anyone self-isolating- in trial at the moment
 - ii. Free scans of any chapter from the book- get in touch with Helen- scan chapter and email to you- won't happen between Christmas and New Years
- Sushil inquired about the Pre-Sessional Math and Stats Book being available online

Action:

- Sushil to reach out to Helen directly and follow up about the status

- Helen inquired about the usage of the library bases available and made the SSLC aware of all the available places, including University Library Grid, Rootes Building, PG Hub

Action:

- SSLC to promote these spaces and make students aware of the safety procedures of maintaining social distance being followed at the same

4. Skills Development and Careers

- Stephanie enquired about the feedback from the economics careers sessions held; Ethan and James mentioned that the Economics careers webinars and events are really helpful.
- Ethan raised the feedback of BES students and raised their concern of future career prospects after MSc BES; Further suggested if there could be more behavioural economics talks.
- Stephanie mentioned about the behavioural science networking event held every year at the Shard. This year will be virtually sometime in 2021 (date to be confirmed). Provided a link for the details:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/conf/behavioural-science-networking/>

Action:

- Ethan will let students know about this event

- Sushil inquired about the research jobs being available at Warwick or beyond eg. Oxford/ JPAL. He suggested an Alumni Talk session for next term. Stephanie informed that the preparation for such an event is underway at the moment. A further discussion followed between Jennifer and Stephanie.

Action:

- Stephanie to coordinate with Alex about the exams dates next term so she can hold the event accordingly
- Stephanie asked for feedback on the future sessions and prospects in the long run and how to conduct the sessions. The SSLC agreed that there are perks to the online sessions as they can go back into it at a later time if they missed any session

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2020

- Discussion around involving more students through WhatsApp, WeChat or Teams meeting. Lucia and Alex suggested promoting the Virtual Common Room as the optimal media for social and academic meets. This logic was supported by a valid point that the reason WhatsApp and WeChat are not the best media as these can be joined by anyone through the group link whereas Teams is restricted to the University of Warwick student membership and can be verified.

Action:

- Lucia to promote the virtual common room through the newsletter
- SSLC to encourage students to gradually switch to Teams from WhatsApp and WeChat (since currently less than 20% of students have joined the Virtual Common Room)

6. Matters Arising

- No concerns

7. Teaching and Learning

i. Teaching plan for next term

- Jennifer provided updates for the next term:
 - a. The structure of the course has not changed hence the optional modules are going to be the same as mentioned on the website. The only change will be the extent to which it will be blended. Lectures with over 25 students will be online
 - b. PGT students prefer more face to face teaching hence the department is looking into that and finding more areas to conduct face to face teaching whilst maintaining social distance.
 - c. Anticipating more face to face teaching for econometrics
 - d. Students are encouraged to inform their lecturers at the start of next term that they would like the option of face to face teaching. The department does react quickly to feedback.
- A brief discussion led by Ayush analysed the split of modules between the two terms. Jennifer clarified that this matter related to the Psychology side

- Arushi enquired how the exams would be held next term. Jennifer confirmed that the university is going to stick with online exams as they are more efficient and do not require large logistics.
- The department is working on maintaining examination integrity. The exams for January are going to follow the same pattern with a 3-hour exam (plus 45 minutes for uploading the graphs and equations) within a 24-hour window. For further exams in May/ June, the 24-hour window could be further reduced to enhance the integrity.
- Kashish depicted concern over the stress of jumbling between typed and written answers in the online exams. Jennifer confirmed that the Alternative Examination Portal (AEP) will be opened for students to practise typing and writing equations through technical practise papers prepared in advance. This is to enable students to become familiar with typing, uploading graphs and including equations. Students are encouraged to adopt the technology for uploading that is most convenient to them. They should be aware of plagiarism hence writing paragraphs on a sheet of paper is not encouraged.

Action:

- SSLC to encourage fellow students to have a go at the multiple attempts at mock exams till they get comfortable
- Lucia to include these details in the next newsletter, which will be sent it by the end of Week 9 or early Week 10
- Jennifer confirmed that there will be videos available to students to get an idea about how to upload documents or type out equations, but this is not to encourage students to type all equations. They are advised to use their discretion and if they think it is more difficult to type an equation, they should click a picture and upload it. Student are encouraged to use the 45 minutes at the end to check if their uploaded documents are visible.
- James mentioned that there could be some recommended method for uploading the image to get more clarity around that. Jennifer mentioned about the different tech capability of different students
- Action:**
 - James to check and find out what works for the students and get back to Jennifer or Lucia (keep in mind students would panic in case they have a different technology that works for them)
- Sushil mentioned that students could do the past exams or mock papers through the AEP, so they can recreate actual exam conditions.
- Action:**
 - Jennifer found the idea interesting and to follow up on the idea with the department

- Kashish mentioned about the different dates on Tabula and the Handbook for the January Macroeconomics and Microeconomics Examination

Action:

- Alex to check with the Admin and send a clarification email

ii. Seminars

Sushil raised concern about the seminars being disrupted due to poor internet connection. He suggested that the internet connection takes clarity away from handwritten answers and hence an alternative media like an iPad could be considered. Alex to take this discussion forward for future use.

iii. Lecture

- James mentioned that even though no lecture slides are being provided by the department due to the environmental concerns and coronavirus spread, some students still find it easier to learn through printed copies than learning online

Action:

- Alex to send feedback back to the department and check if there is a possibility to bring handouts back next term

- James and Sushil showed concerned that sometimes the asynchronous lectures are uploaded at a later date or in a bulk hence suggested if there could be a timetable prepared for the same.

Action:

- Alex to check with lecturers to give more time before asynchronous lecture (as this was initially the plan)

8. Student Engagement and Support

- James expressed the positive feedback from the students for the Christmas Quiz. He suggested that adding such events to every student's Tabula could attract more attendance.
- Alex confirmed if after exam next term would be a good time for another celebratory event. This was supported by the SSLC.
- Alex depicted concern over students in China not turning up for events in the evening; He suggested that the cohort should look at alternative options to engage students more

Action:

- Ziyan to open a discussion around split of morning and evening session to the students through WeChat

8. Assessment and Feedback

• **Maths and stats resources**

- Sushil mentioned that more depth is needed for Maths & Stats Pre-sessional module as students with Macro B and Micro B find it harder with the basic knowledge to cope with the modules. He also suggested if any resources could be made available for this winter vacation

Action:

- Alex to provide feedback to the department on including more resources during the Pre-sessional Maths and Stats.
- Sushil to email Alex on what extra resources would help for this winter vacation so he could check with the department but cannot promise anything as it is on very short notice.

9. Dissertation

- Alex mentioned that the Module Leader is mentioned on the Moodle page
- Sushil expressed concern over technical training being available for Latex. Alex mentioned that there are some videos that are available through the dissertation website but undertaking a dissertation on Latex is an optional choice.

Action:

- SSLC to encourage students to start thinking about their dissertation topics, proactively engage on finding a supervisor- look at the research groups (Econometrics and Labour, Development and History, Macro and International, Micro Theory) and look for your interest. Start looking for supervisors- all office hours are online- so encourage students to meet professors

10. Organisation of the Course

- No concerns

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Alex mentioned that Lory is the main point of contact.

Action

- Get in contact with Lory and bring updates on this session

12. Any other business

- No concerns