

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 February 2011

Present: Professor Christina Hughes (Chair), Professor Miguel Beistegui, Professor Mike Carpenter, Ms Erin Davies, Dr Elizabeth Dedman, Professor Mark Harrison, Dr Claudia Harsch, Professor Christopher Hughes, Professor Daniele Joly, Dr Steve Kettell, Dr David Lamburn, Professor Roger Leng, Professor Robert Lindley, Professor Geoff Lindsay, Professor Michael Luntley, Dr Fiona MacCallum, Professor Abhinay Muthoo, Professor Robin Naylor, Professor Christopher Read, Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey, Professor Jeremy Smith, Dr Paul Sutcliffe, Professor Mark Taylor, Professor Michael Waterson.

Apologies: Dr Ann Adams, Dr Clare Anderson, Dr Catherine Constable, Professor Peter Corvi, Professor Renske Doorenspleet, Professor Julio Faundez, Professor Norman Ireland, Professor Paul Marginson, Professor Nigel Piercy, Mr Paul Raffield, Professor Andrew Reeve, Ms Ann Stewart, Professor Jonathan Tritter.

In attendance: Mr Tim Farr (for item 24/10-11), Dr Mike Glover (for item 22/10-11), Professor Jackie Labbe (for item 24/10-11), Ms Emma King, Ms Jill Shaw, Ms Helen Wollerton.

16/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2010 be approved.

17/10-11 Matters Arising

(a) ESRC Doctoral Training Centre

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair to update members of the Board on the award of the ERSC Doctoral Training Centre and the future developments being planned in this regard, noting that:

- (i) Warwick had been awarded 27 studentships for its ESRC Doctoral Training Centre, and that these would be allocated across all departments in the first year of the scheme;
- (ii) The deadlines for application to the studentships had not yet been announced by the ESRC;
- (iii) Professor Lee Bridges had agreed to act as Interim Director for the Doctoral Training Centre;
- (iv) Departmental representatives had been asked to feed back to the Faculty on specific department needs;

(v) There would be cross-faculty collaboration on modules for the Doctoral Training Centre (DTC), and collaboration with other DTCs would be at the advanced level.

(b) Proposal for Establishment of Warwick Institute of Public Policy (WIPP)

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair to update members of the Board on the proposal to establish the Warwick Institute of Public Policy, noting that the Institute had been successful in its bid to the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) and that the post of Director would be advertised.

(c) Warwick Festival of Social Sciences

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair to update members of the Board on plans for the Warwick Festival of Social Sciences to be held in May 2011, noting that suggestions for an external speaker should be forwarded to the Chair.

(d) Warwick Centre for Memory Studies

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 26 January 2011, the Senate approved the recommendation of the Board that the Warwick Centre for Memory Studies be disestablished.

(e) Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 26 January 2011, the Senate approved the recommendation of the Board that the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations be disestablished.

(f) First Year Board of Examiners 2010/11

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 26 January 2011, the Senate approved the recommendation (of the Chair on behalf of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences) that Professor Peter Corvi should replace Professor Paul Edwards as the Warwick Business School representative on the First Year Board of Examiners for 2010/11.

18/10-11

Chair's Action

(a) Faculty Board Membership – Warwick Business School

REPORTED:

That it had been approved by Chair's action that Professor Stephen Brammer should replace Professor Andrew Oswald as a representative of the Warwick Business School on the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

(b) Graduate Studies Committee Membership

REPORTED:

That it had been approved by Chair's action that Dr. Naomi Eilan should replace Professor David Smith as the representative of the Department of Philosophy on the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

(c) Undergraduate Studies Committee Membership

REPORTED:

That it had been approved by Chair's action that Ms Sarah Hattersley should replace Mr Fergus McKay as the representative for the Centre for Lifelong Learning on the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

19/10-11

Chair's Business

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair to update members on the progress of the refresh of the University Strategy.

20/10-11

Committee Elections

(a) Academic Quality and Standards Committee

REPORTED:

That there was a vacancy for a representative of Faculty of Social Sciences to join the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for the academic year 2010/11 arising from Professor B Rosamond stepping down from his role.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal from the Chair that Professor Christopher Hughes should represent the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences on the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for the academic year 2010/11 be supported.

(b) Board of Undergraduate Studies

REPORTED:

That Professor Roger Leng had been appointed as the new Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies.

21/10-11

Matters Relating to Faculty Research Centres for Consideration

(a) The Legal Research Institute

RESOLVED:

That the recommendation from the Head of the School of Law that Professor Rebecca Probert should formally replace Professor J.Hodgson as Director of the Legal Research Institute with immediate effect be approved.

(b) CEDAR Advisory Board

CONSIDERED:

A request from the Director of the Centre for Educational Development Appraisal and Research for a member of the Faculty Board to serve on the Centre's Advisory Board for 2010/11, noting that this will require attendance at an annual meeting to be held in March.

RESOLVED:

That the request would be circulated to all Board members, and that expressions of interest in serving on the Centre's Advisory Board should be directed to the Director of the Centre.

22/10-11

Changes to Fees, Student Finance and Widening Participation

CONSIDERED:

A discussion paper from the Academic Registrar on the principles for the setting of tuition fees, paper BFSS.13/10-11.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that the following points were made during the discussion:

- (a) University priorities should be taken into account when setting fee levels, including Widening Participation;
- (b) That the role of 4 year Masters degree courses should be further explored, noting that it would be essential for departments to collaborate to offer this model;
- (c) A flat rate fee across all Departments could be introduced, but with a quota of bursaries per department related to family income;
- (d) The University should consider what the marketplace for higher education will look like in 10-15 years, noting that setting a lower fee could have an adverse effect on the University in terms of its finances and reputation relative to its competitors;

- (e) The Widening Participation agenda is an essential part of the excellence agenda;
- (f) Bursaries are vital for students, and it would be preferable to maintain bursaries rather than set fees at a relatively lower level;
- (g) Fee levels should be set in relation to the costs of the course, and then scholarships should be offered. An exercise in determining the costs of teaching needs to be carried out. This is particularly pertinent when considering the costs of postgraduate courses compared to undergraduate courses;
- (h) The expectations of students will heighten in an environment of higher tuition fees, noting that demands for more enhanced feedback, closer contact with the academy and the improvements to the personal tutor system are likely to intensify;
- (i) Students will have greater expectations regarding employability and their achievement on their degree course;
- (j) The University needs to better understand student expectations, and whilst students may increasingly view themselves as consumers, it should be emphasised that the achievement of a degree is more than a transaction;
- (k) Research-led teaching is an important part of being a first class university;
- (l) It should be considered whether the Warwick student population should be smaller in the future;
- (m) The University should make improvements to the student experience regardless of changes in tuition fee levels;
- (n) There is a danger in raising student expectations when the University will not be able to afford large scale improvements.

23/10-11 The Role of Faculty Chairs

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Deputy Registrar on the role of Faculty Chairs, paper BFSS.14/10-11.

RESOLVED:

That the proposals contained within paper BFSS.14/10-11 be approved and recommended for consideration by the Senate, noting that whilst there was some concern regarding the democratic shift demonstrated in the paper it was a viable proposal to be taken forward.

24/10-11 Graduate Studies

RECEIVED:

An oral report and paper BFSS.15/10-11 from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies on the Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarships.

RESOLVED:

That Departments should contact the Graduate School and the Development and Alumni Relations Office to discuss potential opportunities under the Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarships scheme.

25/10-11 ITS Strategy Overview 2010/11

CONSIDERED:

An overview of the ITS Strategy outlining the planned activities for 2010/11, paper BFSS.16/10-11.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that the ITS Strategy was an evolution in the right direction, and that it should be ensured that there is a focus on the needs of users.

26/10-11 Items to Receive

RECEIVED:

(a) A report from the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 2 February 2011, paper BFSS.17/10-11.

(b) A report from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee held on 1 February 2011, paper BFSS.18/10-11.

(c) A report from the Faculty IT Committee

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Faculty IT Committee held on 2 February 2011, paper BFSS.19/10-11.

(d) A report from the University International Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the University International Committee held on 24 November 2010, paper BFSS.20/10-11.

27/10-11 Faculty Lunch

REPORTED:

(a) That the Spring Term Faculty Lunch would be held on Wednesday 2 March from 12.30pm in the Social Sciences Lounge, D2.03, Warwick Business School;

(b) That the topic for discussion would be the student experience and changes to tuition fees, and that the School of Law would also give a presentation on their widening participation activities.

28/10-11 Date of Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences would be held on Wednesday 1 June at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, University House.