

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 5 December 2007 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

<i>Present</i>	Provost, Vice-Provost, Senior Lecturer, Registrar, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Acting Dean of Arts and Humanities, Dr P Coleman, Dean of Engineering and Systems Sciences, Dr H Gibbons, Dean of Health Sciences, Dr V A Campbell, Dr J P Gormley, Dean of Science, Dr M E G Lyons, Dr M J F Brown, Dr M L Brennan, Dr B M Lucey, Ms F M Haffey, Dr A O'Gara, Mr B Rock, Mr H Sullivan, Mr G Magee.
<i>Apologies</i>	Dr M H Adams, Dr G Biehler, Acting Dean of Social and Human Sciences, Mr C Hallworth, Mr C Reilly, Professor N M Claffey, Librarian.
<i>In attendance</i>	Secretary, Academic Secretary.
<i>Observers</i>	Mr D L Parris.
<i>Student observers</i>	Mr D Walsh, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Ms E Keaveny.
<i>By invitation</i>	Staff Secretary (for CL/07-08/057).

SECTION A

- CL/07-08/052 **Statutory Declaration** Mr G Magee, Vice-President of the Graduate Student's Union, made the statutory declaration.
- CL/07-08/053 **Minutes** The Minutes of the meetings of 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2<sup>nd</sup> November and the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were approved and signed.
- CL/07-08/054 **Matters Arising**  
The Secretary referring to the Council meetings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007, noted Board's concern about the low attendance at meetings where Chairs are proposed. The Provost urged Council members to make themselves available for such meetings of Council in the future as poor attendance could eventually undermine the process.
- In response to a comment made on the state of industrial relations at Trinity College, (Actum CL/07-08/032), the meeting was advised that matters related to staffing should be directed to the Board.

**CL/07-08/055 Provost's Report** The Provost noted that Trinity is now ranked 53<sup>rd</sup> in the world according to the Times Higher Education Supplement University World Rankings. He commended this success as a mark of the commitment and excellence of all Trinity staff and students.

**CL/07-08/056 Senior Lecturer's Annual Report** The Senior Lecturer's Annual Report 2006-07 with Admissions Data for 2007-08 was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Senior Lecturer in introducing the Report, drew Council's attention to areas of academic policy and planning that dominated the work of the Senior Lecturer's Office (SLO) during the academic year 2006-07. These included work relating to academic restructuring; SIF (Strategic Innovation Fund); the implementation of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) new funding model; ECTS and the Bologna Directive; modularisation and the academic year structure. As well as providing administrative support to a range of committees, the Senior Lecturer's Area also manages undergraduate admissions; examinations; commencements; broad curriculum; access programmes; quality improvement and quality assurances; teaching and learning initiatives. In 2007, the Alumni and Proctor's Office coordinated the Seanad election, and the Student Administration Systems User Support Unit coordinated a pilot on-line postgraduate applications systems. The work of the area is highly depended on fit-for-purpose information systems, and the discontinuation of the implementation of the student administration system, QuercusPlus, represented a significant setback for the area. There is general College awareness of the importance of having fit-for-purpose systems, and an application for part funding of a student information system was made under College's submission to the SIF cycle 2.

The Senior Lecturer invited the Academic Secretary to highlight the main developments in respect of undergraduate admissions to the University. The Academic Secretary noted that applications to the CAO (Central Applications Office) increased by 3% on the 2006 application figures. Trinity College continues to attract a substantial proportion (11%) of first preference applications, but the percentage of eligible first preference was significantly lower. Ninety four percent (94%) of the overall quota of 2,490 was filled. The main reason for not filling quotas relates to low student interest for a course. Twenty seven percent (27%) of new entrants presented 550+ points, while a total of 83% presented 450+ points. Only 6.7% of new entrants presented 400 or less points. The percentage trend of acceptance to offers shows substantial variance from year to year, and in 2007 the acceptance to offers ranged from 44% to 100%. Finally, the number of entrance exhibitions increased from 531 in 2006 to 568 in 2007.

The Senior Lecturer highlighted other points in respect of the Report. The total student population in 2006-07 was 15,492 of which 31% were postgraduate students. Ninety six new academic appointments were made in 2006-07 of which seven were to chairs, two to senior lectureships, and 87 to lectureships. Of those appointed across all grades 56% held doctoral degrees, and of the 50 permanent appointments, 72% held a doctoral degree.

The overall College staff:student ratio is 1:17. Depending on the discipline, there is a considerable difference in staff:student ratios, and the ratio ranges from 1:14 in the Faculties of Engineering and Systems Science, and Science, to 1:23 in the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences. The percentage of full-time Junior Freshman students who successfully completed the year in 2006-07 averaged 90% across College. A total of 442 students presented for the Foundation Scholarship examination in 2007, and 76 Foundation and Non-Foundation Scholarships were awarded; 50% were awarded to

females, which may be low in light of the fact that 63% of the undergraduate student population is female.

The Senior Lecturer highlighted the disparity in the award of first class honor degrees across disciplines, ranging from 3% to 52%, and in the award of gold medals. He noted that this matter is being addressed by the Heads' Committee. In 2006-07 thirty one commencement ceremonies and ten diploma/certificate ceremonies were held during which 4,121 degrees and 995 diploma and certificate awards were conferred.

In concluding his overview of the Annual Report, the Senior Lecturer commended the commitment of the staff in the Senior Lecturer's Area and the quality of leadership provided.

Council in discussing the Report noted that male students were disproportionately awarded Foundation Scholarship and sought more analysis of why this is the case. With respect to the disparity in the award of first class honors degrees, it was suggested that this could be addressed by using the full spread of marks (70-100) and that all examination papers should have model answers and marks assigned. In considering the matter of courses not filling their quota, the view was expressed that these courses, especially Latin, Classics and Early Irish, should be protected because they represent the very nature of a traditional university. It was commented that any increase in the number of undergraduate students should take into account the impact that an increase would have on supports, pass rates, retention and staff:student ratios. The importance of recruiting academic staff with doctorate degrees was emphasised especially given the university's focus on increasing the number of research students. In response to a query on the number of students from Northern Ireland, the Academic Secretary confirmed that the percentage of registered students from Northern Ireland has remained relatively steady over the past number of years. She noted that A' Level applicants tend to apply to a small number of high demand courses, most notably Medicine, Law, Dental Science and English, and that overall there is practically no 'A' Level demand for the other undergraduate courses.

The Provost in concluding discussion on this item, thanked the Senior Lecturer and the Academic Secretary for the Report and expressed his appreciation on behalf of Council for the work of all the staff of the Senior Lecturer's Area.

**CL/07-08/057 Staff Office Annual Report 2006-07** A copy of the Staff Office Annual Report 2006-07 was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Staff Secretary attended Council for this item. Introducing the Report the Vice-Provost expressed her thanks to the Staff Office for this first ever Annual Report which was initiated on her request. She drew Council's attention to issues of academic policy, noting in particular the policy on staff retention; revised academic probation procedures; agreed policy on academic titles. The Vice-Provost noted that the removal of quotas for promotion to the grades of Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor together with the new policy and procedures to deal with competitive retention has had a positive impact on staff retention. She informed Council that it has been Trinity's policy to recruit only at the lecturer grade, and in 2006 following consultation with staff representative bodies it was agreed that recruitment into the Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor grades could be progressed. Two new staff were recruited to the Senior Lecturer grade and four, to the Associate Professor grade in 2006-2007. The Vice-Provost referred to the additional workload on the Staff Office as a result of the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003 and the PMDS (Performance Management and Development System).

The Provost welcomed the Staff Secretary to Council and invited him to introduce other aspects of the Staff Office Report 2006-07. The Staff Secretary explained the overall organisational structure of the Staff Office which deals with recruitment and employment; staff planning; promotions review committees; staff relations and pensions service; staff development. Five hundred and ninety two (592) posts were filled from the beginning of the academic year 2006-07 to-date of which 136 were newly created posts, 456, replacement posts. One thousand five hundred and sixteen (1,516) employment contracts were issued. He provided details of the recruitment process from the drawing of the job specification to the signing of a contract. He noted the workload involved in ensuring compliance with the provision of the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003, and the need for better information systems to manage this on an on-going basis.

In commenting on the staff planning and payroll section of the Office, the Staff Secretary noted the benefits of the new appointment of a Staff Planning Officer. This section of the Staff Office deals with the College's annual pay which amounted to €180 million for the academic year 2006-07. The Staff Planning and Payroll section of the Staff Office also deals with the activity relating to research grants, auditing of research accounts, and establishing procedures for compliance with employment legislation, national pay awards, maternity, adoptive and parental leave and provision of internal and external statistical data. Developments in respect of information systems and security and data structure maintenance were noted.

The Staff Secretary noted the arrangements in place in the Staff Office for managing performance, and highlighted the difficulty in forward planning and improving quality when 33% of the staff are on contracts funded from external sources. In conclusion, he expressed his thanks to the staff office staff and commended the achievements of the Office despite the very serious staffing shortage during 2007.

In considering the Staff Office Annual Report Council stressed the importance of implementing the second round of the PMDS in a consistent way as it was felt that there was some slippage in its implementation. The Staff Secretary replied that it was difficult to monitor the implementation of the PMDS across College, and felt that the new HR Faculty Advisors would provide appropriate assistance in this regard. Having introduced the PMDS, it was now necessary to maintain it and adhere to the implementation schedule. Council questioned why College continued to issue contracts of indefinite duration. Staff on contracts of indefinite duration enjoy the same rights and privileges as staff on permanent contracts, but those on contracts of indefinite duration believe that there must be some difference, if only in status. Contracts of indefinite duration are issued to staff who are funded from external sources.

The Provost in concluding the discussion, thanked the Staff Secretary and the Vice-Provost and noted in particular the challenge of producing a first annual report. He also expressed his appreciation on behalf of Council for the work of all the staff in the Staff Office.

**CL/07-08/058 Graduate Studies - Higher Degree Course Proposals** A copy of proposals for new courses leading to a M.Sc. in Comparative European Politics and a M.Sc. in Finance were circulated with papers for the meeting. The Dean of Graduate Studies spoke to this item.

- (i) **Comparative European Politics - M.Sc./Postgraduate Diploma**  
 The new course in European Politics is proposed by the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy to be delivered over one year full-time and two years, part-time. The first entry is proposed for October 2008, catering for a maximum of 30 EU students. The main focus of the course is on democratic politics in modern Europe and aims to provide students with the necessary skills for a range of research related careers as well as careers in other areas. The course is suitable for students who wish to progress to doctoral research, or to pursue careers in applied policy research, the civil service, European Union institutions, non-governmental organisations and the media. The course is an integral part of the School's strategic plan and of the School's drive to strengthen recruitment to Ph.D. programmes. The course structure complies with College's policy on ECTS. The Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that the course proposal has received a positive external review, and has been approved by the Library Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee. The financial and resource aspects of the course were approved by the Resource Management Committee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007.

Council approved the course in Comparative European Politics leading to an award of an M.Sc. and an exit award of a postgraduate diploma.

- (ii) **M.Sc. in Finance** The new course in Finance leading to the award of a M.Sc. is proposed by the School of Business to be delivered over one year full-time and two years, part-time. The first entry is proposed for September 2008, catering for a maximum of 40 students. The proposed course is in response to market demand and in line with the School's and College's strategic plan. It is designed to assist in providing finance for staff expansion and concomitant growth in an area wherein the School of Business already has a strong international profile. The course aims to provide graduates with a thorough grounding in key concepts, tools and applications in modern finance, and with an appreciation of modern finance research. It also aims to lay the foundations for lifelong learning in finance and related areas by graduates, and is designed to be cognate with government and state aims. The course structure complies with College's policy on ECTS. The Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that the course proposal has received a positive external review, and has been approved by the Library Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee. The financial and resource aspects of the course were approved by the Resource Management Committee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007.

Council approved the course in Finance leading to the award of an M.Sc.

**CL/07-08/059 Any Other Business - Library Opening Hours** In response to a query about Library opening hours, the Secretary confirmed that Executive Officers approved a proposal for Library opening hours on Sundays.

## SECTION B

**CL/07-08/060 Heads' of School Committee** Draft minutes of the Heads' of School Committee meeting of the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were circulated with papers for the meeting. The Senior Lecturer drew Council's attention to the discussion on ARAM (Actum HC/07-08/14) noting in particular the view that Schools require stability and certainty in order to plan and to achieve this the Heads recommend a full implementation of the

ARAM when the three-Faculty structure is instituted. The need for a strategic fund at Faculty level was considered essential in order to assist 'over-funded' Schools and to implement a Faculty strategy. One member of Council expressed the view that full introduction of ARAM might begin to free up space.

In response to a query about the Broad Curriculum in the context of discussions on the academic year structure (Actum HC/07-08/16), the Senior Lecturer confirmed that the Broad Curriculum would be considered as part of the discussions on modularisation. There was some general comments on the academic year structure, and the Provost advised that a final proposal on the new academic structure would be brought before Council in due course.

**CL/07-08/061 Information Policy Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Information Policy Committee from its meeting of 25 October 2007, which had been circulated.

**CL/07-08/062 Research Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Research Committee from its meeting of 25 October 2007, which had been circulated.

**CL/07-08/063 Student Services Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Student Services Committee from its meeting of 16 October 2007, which had been circulated.

### SECTION C

**CL/07-08/064 Council Membership - Graduate Students' Union** The Council noted that Mr G Magee has been elected to the Vice-Presidency of the Graduate Students' Union and will serve as a member of Council for 2007-2008.

**CL/07-08/065 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners** The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 23 October 2007 and noted by Board on 21 November 2007.

(i) **Professional Higher Degrees by Research Alone**

**MD** Rustom Pervez Manecksha.

(ii) **Higher Degrees by Research Alone**

**PhD** Conor Timothy Buckley; Sara Jane Callagy; Lorraine Maria Duffy; Neil Martin Higgins; Thomas Lagoarde Segot; Matthew Lambert; Denis McCarthy; Deborah Moore; Antonios Platsas; Yunhe Shi; Atul Singh; Melanie Van Locke.

**MSc** Niamh Gibbons; Elise Jennings; Ronan James O'Sullivan; Gillian Roddie; Ruth Marie Walsh.

**MDentCh** Dimitris Iliadis; Gary Alan Leonard; Nasser Marafi; Areti Rentzia.

**CL/07-08/066 Graduate Studies Committee - Business requiring approval of Council** The Council noted a memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies, circulated dated 23 November 2007 and confirmed:

- (i) Academic Appeals Committee for Graduate Students - the decision of the committee in the case of a postgraduate student in the School of Medicine;
- (ii) MSc (Mgt) International Business Programme - a change in the starting date from October 2007 to January 2008;
- (iii) Deferral of next entry from October 2007 to October 2008 for MSc in Economic Policy Studies; Msc in Clinical Supervision; MPhil/PGradDip in Reformation and Enlightenment Studies; MSc in Mammalian Cell Physiology, and MSc/PGradDip in Chemical and Biological Techniques.

**CL/07-08/067 Co-ordinating Committee for the Professional Course in Theology** The Council noted and approved the following membership:

- Registrar *Chair*
- Head of the Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics
- Head of Department, Religions and Theology
- Another member from Religions and Theology
- Another member from Trinity College Dublin
- The Principal of the Church of Ireland Theological College
- Another member of staff from the Church of Ireland Theological College
- The Archbishop of Armagh
- The Archbishop of Dublin
- Another bishop as nominated by the House of Bishops of the Church Ireland
- Student representatives (3)

**CL/07-08/068 Senior Promotions** The Council noted a memorandum from the Acting Secretary to the Senior Promotions Committee, circulated dated 13 November 2007, approved by Board on 21 November 2007.

**CL/07-08/069 Student Cases** The Council noted and approved the request of the Senior Lecturer that the following students may be permitted to repeat, as a third attempt, as follows:

- (i) 00111040 - 6<sup>th</sup> year Medicine;
- (ii) 02871513 - JS year in full;
- (iii) 04821688 - JS Science year off books;
- (iv) 03505821 - SF TSM year in full.

**SECTION D**

**In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.**

Signed .....

Date .....