

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 4 March 2009 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

<i>Present</i>	Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Research, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr C Laudet, Dr C MacMaolain, Dr C Morris, Professor J Wickham, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Professor J Fitzpatrick, Dr V Kelly, Dr M Lyons, Dr D O'Sullivan, Dean of Health Sciences, Dr D Brennan, Professor M McCarron, Dr K Johnson, Dr A O'Gara, Professor G Whyte, Mr H Sullivan, Mr F Hughes, Ms A Murphy, Mr D Kavanagh.
<i>Apologies</i>	Provost, Senior Tutor, Professor M Radomski, Ms D Flynn, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Mr D Walsh, Ms N Cleary, Ms A Mc Gowan.
<i>In attendance</i>	Librarian, Acting Secretary, Academic Secretary, Chief Operating Officer.

SECTION A

CL/08-09/105 Minutes The Minutes of the meeting of 11 February 2009 were approved and signed.

CL/08-09/106 Matter Arising from the Minutes Responding to a query on the Foundation Scholarship Examination, the Academic Secretary confirmed that she was consulting Directors of Teaching and Learning (Undergraduate) in the Schools of Dental Science, Nursing and Midwifery, Education and Medicine to agree suitable arrangements that would allow those Senior Freshman students who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to sit the Foundation Scholarship Examination to do so. A proposal will be brought to the next meeting of Council.

CL/08-09/107 Vice-Provost's Report The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council that the Provost was attending the first meeting of the Government's Higher Education Strategy Group. The Group is chaired by Dr Hunt, an economist and a former special adviser to Mr Brian Cowen in the Department of Finance. Among the terms of reference of the Higher Education Strategy Group is to examine the effectiveness of the use of resources in higher education. The Vice-Provost/ Chief Academic Officer also commented on the worsening state of the public finances, and informed Council of the other Government body dubbed "An Bord Snip Nua" that is charged with finding billions in savings across all Government departments and the public sector. There is a strong drive towards rationalisation and greater collaboration in the higher education sector, and it is important that Trinity College shapes its own future in this adverse and increasingly directive environment. He spoke briefly about plans for greater collaboration with the University College Dublin

(UCD) in a joint submission to The Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLII) cycle 5. He noted that the Dean of Research will make a presentation to Council on this matter later in the meeting.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer commented on the growing number of graduates who are becoming unemployed and, referring to previous Council discussions on this matter, he noted that a small taskforce was established to address how Trinity College could contribute to up-skilling or re-skilling these newly unemployed individuals. To-date discussions have focused on three initiatives: the provision of Higher Diploma options across undergraduate degree programmes; the provision of dedicated "post-experience" Master programmes in areas such as Biotechnology, Information Technology, and Green Technology; and the provision of a Diploma/Masters in Entrepreneurship. The Undergraduate Studies Committee discussed a proposal on this matter at its meeting of the 3rd March 2009, and the Committee was very supportive of assessing Higher Diploma options.

The Dean of Graduate Studies informed Council that she was advancing proposals at the postgraduate level, and noted that it should be possible to offer high level up-skilling Masters programmes and to recognise prior learning and work experience.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council that the Higher Education Authority (HEA) is anxious to receive proposals from the universities on this matter, and he noted that a provisional proposal would be submitted to the HEA in the near future.

CL/08-09/108 Research Matters The Dean of Research made a presentation on PRTLII cycle 5 and progress to-date in preparing Trinity's institutional bid. An objective of the PRTLII is to contribute to national objectives for higher education and research, and in particular those set out in 'Building Ireland's Smart Economy - A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal, 2008' and the Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation (SSTI). The PRTLII cycle 5 is a five-year programme commencing in 2010 and funded through the National Development Programme (NDP). A fund of €300 million will be made available, of which €200 million is for capital development and €100 million for recurrent funding. PRTLII cycle 5 has three strands: (i) physical infrastructure; (ii) the implementation of strategies for the delivery of structured PhD education, so-called 'soft' infrastructure; and (iii) the development of capability for new and emerging areas of potential. In developing proposals, eligible institutions of higher education must take into account a number of major considerations, namely, institutional strategy; building on investments previously made (but not 'continuity money'); relevance to Ireland's economic growth; consolidation of activities, for example, rationalisation by programmatic approach; maturity of proposals, to include meaningful collaboration and prominence of the proposal in other institution's prioritisations; and, matching funds.

The Dean of Research noted that a Trinity PRTLII Panel has been established to advance the institutional bid, and comprises the Provost, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, the Dean of Research, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the three Faculty Deans, and Ms Oonagh Kinsman, Trinity Research and Innovation Office. Addressing the strands of the PRTLII cycle 5, the Dean highlighted the areas of concentration for Trinity College. The Pearse Street Development fits Strand 1a, the Open Infrastructure element, as it unlocks the campus for all Faculties and addresses expansion. The Pearse Street Development project is very mature and has already received Board approval. Strand 1b relates to 'National Shared Facilities' and Trinity is prioritising those areas which lever additional capital for the Pearse Street

Development, and those that map directly to prioritised research in the Strategic Plan. Strand 2 relates to structured PhD programmes, and priority will be given in the Trinity institutional bid to those proposals that (i) have clear institutional strengths; (ii) can map directly to prioritised research in the Strategic Plan; (iii) can deliver coherent graduate education; and, (iv) can build on previous strategic investments such as, for example, Facilities Enhancement, Strategic Innovation Funds 2, and non-exchequer input. Strand 3 relates to new and emergent areas, and there is a very small amount of funding available for this strand. There has been some limitations in the Call for Proposals and in the Minister's speech for Strand 3. The Call for Proposals refer to 'convergent technologies' described as '*interdisciplinary research that has the future potential to become a distinct discipline in its own right, e.g. blending BIO/ICT.*' (Page 17).

The Dean of Research informed Council of the internal process for preparing the institutional bid, noting that the 2nd April 2009 is the deadline for the institutional submission of Phase I. He drew Council's attention to the over-arching strategy for the institutional submission, noting the College must pay close attention to the delivery of the SSTI and relevant areas in the 'Smart Economy' strategy. It is now expected that programmes must consolidate investment and deliver critical mass, and institutional collaboration must be meaningful. He informed Council of the TCD-UCD collaboration for PRTL cycle 5, and noted the proposed degree of collaboration with respect to the delivery of structured PhDs across a range of disciplines. It is proposed that there will be high levels of collaboration in Chemistry, Physics, Biology of Human Health, Economics and Political Science, and differing degrees of collaboration across other areas. Commenting on the rationale behind this high level TCD-UCD collaboration, the Dean of Research noted that over 50% of the PhD population nationally is within TCD and UCD. The proximity of the two institutions lends itself to delivering successful structured PhDs with value added. The capital developments of both institutions complement each other, and Dublin is positioned to be the European City of Science in 2012. This collaboration will build on the track record of the two institutions in delivering collaborative programmes.

The Dean of Research commented on the importance of strong collaboration in order to address the key 'added value' requirements of the PRTL cycle 5. A balance between academic excellence and relevance to the economic realities within which the bid will be assessed must be achieved. He commented that specific training will continue to be central to individual GREPs (Graduate Research Education Programme) and in the context of PRTL cycle 5, he noted that 'discipline only' consideration would not be successful. It is expected to advance 'core' transferable skills training for our PhD cohort within a framework of creative thinking and innovation, two key themes in the PRTL cycle 5 Call for Proposals, and also identified by employers as being important in the workplace. It is planned to run, in close collaboration with UCD, centralised innovation transferable skills training for PhD students attached to PRTL cycle 5 structured PhDs.

Council discussed the Dean of Research's presentation on PRTL cycle 5. In response to a query, the Dean confirmed that it is expected that European languages will also be provided as part of the transferable skills training. Responding to a comment on the state of public finances and the possibility that PRTL funds may not be available, the Dean noted the intrinsic value of the proposal and the need to advance it with or without PRTL funding.

Council complemented the Dean of Research on a very comprehensive presentation, and supported the general direction of the PRTL cycle 5 institutional bid.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings

CL/08-09/109 Undergraduate Admissions

- (i) **Preliminary CAO Application Statistics 2009** Statistical data and a covering memorandum from the Admissions Officer dated 24th February 2009 were circulated with papers for the meeting. The Academic Secretary introducing this item, drew Council's attention to the details of the preliminary CAO (Central Applications Office) application statistics for 2009 together with comparative statistical data for 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008, and noted the following key points:
- A total of 67,907 applications were submitted to CAO by 1st February, 2009 showing an increase of 6.25% over 2008 (63,910).
 - There are 7,310 first preference applications to TCD, representing an increase of 10.2% on the 2008 figures. Much of the increase can be attributed to the seven new undergraduate programmes on offer for 2009 entry: however, if these new courses were removed there is still an overall increase of 3.24% in first preference applications for 2009-10.
 - The new courses on offer are Law & Business with 215 first preference for 25 places; Law & Political Science with 95 first preference for 20 places; Ancient & Medieval History and Culture with 18 first preferences for 15 places; Political Science & Geography with 14 first preference for 15 new places; Human Health & Disease with 35 first preference for 35 places; Earth Sciences with 47 first preference for 10 places; and Business & Computing with 39 first preferences for 25 places.
 - The relatively small number of first preferences for Human Health & Disease reflects the trend that students choose Medicine or Dental Science as a first option and other health related courses are placed after these.
 - First preference applications to TSM have increased by 10.4% (1028 in 2009; 927 in 2008).
 - Courses showing significant increases in the number of first preference applications include: Human Genetics; Philosophy; Philosophy & Political Science; Psychiatric Nursing; Computer Science, and Management Science and Information Systems Studies.
 - First preference applications to Law, Clinical Speech & Language Studies, Pharmacy, and Sociology and Social Policy have decreased.
 - First preference applications to BESS and Science, un-denominated courses with large quotas, have increased by 14.2% and 12.7% respectively. Applications to Engineering, however, have decreased by 12.5% but this is more or less in line with the sectoral trend.

The Academic Secretary drew Council's attention to the data by course group across the sector. She noted a substantial increase in the number of first preferences to Science this year (20% on 2008 figures). Surprisingly, the number of first preference to Pharmacy has decreased by almost 25%. New entrants to medicine in the 2009-10 academic year are required to sit the Health Professionals Admissions Test, and it is interesting to note that the number of first preference to medicine at a sectoral level has increased by almost 23%.

In response to a query, the Academic Secretary confirmed that these data are still preliminary and that the real picture will only be available when examination results are published. The importance of filling quotas was stressed, and the procedures that were put in place in 2008-09 should be reinstated for the 2009-10 intake. The Academic Secretary confirmed that

she is working through the Faculty Administrators to establish changes to undergraduate quotas, and a meeting with the Deans to agree final figures will be held prior to the CAO season.

- (ii) **Entrance Awards** A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer dated 23rd February 2009 was circulated. The Senior Lecturer introduced this item. She explained that on the basis of public examination results entrance exhibitions are awarded to Junior Freshman EU new entrants to full-time undergraduate degree programmes who have achieved an equivalent of 545 points (A1,A2 x 4, B1) or AAAC at A Level. Each exhibition is in the form of a book prize worth €254, awarded in two equal parts.

The total number of awards has increased considerably in the last few years. In 2001, 496 entrance exhibitions were awarded and in 2008, 598 were awarded, representing a 17% increase. The Senior Lecturer drew Council's attention to the table showing the number of students at each point band awarded an entrance exhibition in 2007 and 2008. Fifty two thousand one hundred and forty four (52,144) CAO applicants presented for the Leaving Certificate examination in 2008, and of these 1,744 (3.3%) achieved 545 points or more. Awards were made to 598 students, representing 23% of the Junior Freshman class for 2008/09. Entrance Exhibitions have historically been held in high esteem, however, their standing could now be regarded as being somewhat diminished given the very large numbers of students qualifying. The Senior Lecturer proposed to increase the eligibility criterion for the award.

Council noted the proposal and approved that the eligibility criterion for the award of Entrance Exhibition be increased to 560 points (Leaving Certificate and equivalent) and four A grades in the A Level examination. The value of the book prize, awarded in two parts, will increase to €300, and the revised policy will be applied to the 2009-10 new entrants' intake.

- (iii) **Open Day** A memorandum from the Senior Lecturer dated 24th February 2009 was circulated. Speaking to this item, the Senior Lecturer informed Council that the College Open Day (undergraduate) traditionally takes place on the Wednesday of the second week of December each year. Trinity's Open Day for undergraduate programmes caters for 6th year students and is held in December 2009 to allow prospective students the opportunity to access information about College's courses in advance of the CAO closing date of the 1st February. Approximately 7,000 prospective students, guidance counsellors and parents attend Open Day. It is by far the most important undergraduate student recruitment event for College. Under the new academic year structure the second week of December is a teaching week (Week 11). The Senior Lecturer sought Council's approval to schedule Open Day in the future on Wednesday of Teaching Week 11 in the first semester.

Council discussed this proposal and the view was expressed that Open Day should be held in Week 7, Study Week, of the first teaching semester. There were differing opinions on this, and it was suggested that Open Day should be held on a Saturday. The Academic Secretary noted that secondary schools are becoming more judicious about the type of events that they will allow their students to attend. There are too many College Open Days and third level recruitment fairs, and second level schools do not want their students to be absent for too many days in the year. There is also very limited teacher substitution available. In light of this, it is likely that Open Days will have to

held on a Saturday or during the second level term break. It was commented that attendance would likely be low if Open Day were to be held on a Saturday. It would also be necessary to coordinate Trinity's Open Day if held on a Saturday so as not to clash with other HEI (Higher Education Institution) Open Days. The Academic Secretary noted some of the logistical and resource problems of holding Open Day in early November.

Council recommended that the Academic Secretary liaise with the Schools on this matter and to report back to the next meeting of Council.

CL/08-09/110 Academic Year Structure A memorandum dated 24th February from the Registrar proposing a schedule of commencements in the new academic year structure was circulated. The Registrar introduced this item and explained the rationale for the new dates for the Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer Commencements, highlighting the arrangements for when a schedule was interrupted by bank holidays.

Council approved the schedule of commencements for the new academic year as follows:

Michaelmas Term

- Autumn Commencements will take place in teaching weeks 6 (Thursday, Friday) and 7 (Monday, Friday).
- Winter commencement will take place in teaching week 11 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday).

Trinity Term

- Spring Commencements will take place in the second week of the revision period (in April) at the start of Trinity Term. There will be two ceremonies in order to address the steady increase of higher degree candidates seeking conferral at this session. Where Good Friday falls in this week, commencements will be scheduled for the Monday and Tuesday of that week.
- In those years where Trinity Monday coincides with Easter Monday, commencements will take place on the first week of the revision week (Thursday, Friday) and Trinity Week will take place in the second week of the revision period on these occasions.
- Summer commencements will take place on Monday, Thursday and Friday of the last week of statutory term. This will avoid any clash with the June Bank Holiday weekend, while at the same time ensuring that the medicine students are conferred with their qualifications in advance of starting their internships on July 1.

CL/08-09/111 Cessation of an Academic Programme - B.A. in Music Technology A memorandum dated 24th February 2009 from the Academic Secretary was circulated. Speaking to this item, the Academic Secretary referred Council to its discussion on the B.A. in Music Technology at its meeting of the 11th February 2009. She informed Council that the School Executive, the School Committee, and the Faculty Dean have all approved the withdrawal of the B.A. in Music Technology. As previously discussed, the reasons for withdrawing this programme relate to resources. The School of Drama, Film and Music proposes instead to introduce a new technology stream into the existing B.A. in Music. One Council member flagged a concern that the title of the existing B.A. in Music Technology appears to have been changed in the draft undergraduate prospectus that is currently being circulated to the Schools. The Academic Secretary

responded that she would alert the Admissions Officer to this, and confirmed that changes to course titles must also be approved by Council.

Council approved the withdrawal of the B.A. in Music Technology with immediate effect.

CL/08-09/112 Any Other Business

- (i) **Foundation Scholarship** A memorandum dated 3rd March 2009 from the Senior Lecturer was tabled. The Senior Lecturer expressed concern that recommendations (vi) and (vii) of the proposal on the Foundation Scholarship approved by Council at its meeting of November 5th 2008 was open to interpretation, and she wished to have this matter clarified by Council. She highlighted the relevant text, and noted that on foot of these recommendations, disciplines and course co-ordinators were requested by the Senior Lecturer to design Scholarship Examination Papers not exceeding nine hours in total for any student. Subsequent correspondence with Schools advised that students should not sit more than nine hours of written examinations. The vast majority of Schools have submitted their Calendar entry on the form of the Scholarship examination and have adopted the nine hour limit. There is, however, a proposal for a longer examination period based on an interpretation of recommendation (vi). This was not supported by the Undergraduate Studies Committee when it considered examination structures for Scholarship at its meeting of March 3rd 2009.

In response to a query, the Senior Lecturer noted that those courses that use continuous assessment and *viva-voce* as part of the Scholarship Examination can continue to do so, and that such assessments are in addition to the 8-9 hour written Scholarship Examination.

Council confirmed that the Foundation Scholarship examination should consist of no more than eight or nine hours of examination papers, and where applicable, continuous assessment and *viva-voce* are in addition to the written Scholarship Examination.

- (ii) **Chair of Molecular and Clinical Nutrition - Search Committee** Under Other Business the Council noted a memorandum from the Dean of Health Sciences, tabled dated 13 February 2009 and approved the membership of the search committee as follows:

Provost
Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer
Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences
Head of the School of Medicine
Professor M McCarron
Professor J Reynolds
External Assessors

SECTION B

CL/08-09/113 Graduate Studies Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Graduate Studies Committee from its meeting of 19 February 2009, which had been circulated.

CL/08-09/114 Undergraduate Studies Committee The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Undergraduate Studies Committee from its meeting of 3 February 2009, which had been circulated.

CL/08-09/115 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 27 January 2009, which had been circulated.

SECTION C

CL/08-09/116 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:

(i) 28 January 2009

(a) Professional Higher Degrees by Research Alone

DChDent Emily Clarke.

(b) Higher Degrees by Research Alone

PhD Lisa-Marie Griffith; Doreen Hoerold; Valeria Onnis;
Jennifer May Redmond; Christina Toft.

MSc Barry Heffernan; Bhavna Satheesh; Natalie Elaine
Schluter; Catherine Geraldine Waldron.

MLitt Magdalena Nikolaeva Cholakova; Paul William Flynn.

(ii) 11 February 2009

(a) Professional Higher Degrees by Research Alone

DChDent Seif Eldin Nasr Mohamed.

(b) Higher Degrees by Research Alone

PhD Mark Collery; Sinead Crowe; Louise Anna Donohue;
Damien Michael French; Jerrard Michael Hayes; Sean
Kilbride; Áine Catriona Murphy; Niamh Sarah Murray;
Shane Thomas Ó Conchúir; Jerome Nimal Theodore
Sahabandhu; Melanie Watson.

MLitt John-Paul Faulkner.

CL/08-09/117 **Moderatorship in Environmental Sciences - Course Director** The Council noted and approved the nomination of Dr M L Williams (2009-2012).

CL/08-09/118 **Supplementary List of Teaching Assistants/Assistant Examiners 2008/2009** The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Senior Lecturer, circulated, dated 25 February 2009.

SECTION D

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

Signed

Date