

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN  
TRINITY COLLEGE**

**GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 am on Thursday 16th June, 2005  
Arts Building

**Present:** Chair: Dean of Graduate Studies (Prof. Patrick J. Prendergast), Mr Trevor Peare, Mr John Murphy, Prof. Terence Brown, Dr Christine Morris, Dr John Donegan, Mr Gerard Tobin, Dr Brian Lucey, Dr Alan Moore, Dr Frederick Falkiner, Prof. Vincent Cahill, Mr Ryan Sheridan, Mr Charles Larkin

**In attendance:** Ms Ewa Sadowska, Ms Helen Thornbury

**Apologies:** Dean of Research (Prof. Ian Robertson), Dr Alan Kramer, Dr Vasilis Politis, Dr Trevor Hodkinson, Dr Evelyn Mahon, Mr Ronan Hodson,

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**188.0 Minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2005**

The minutes of the meeting of 12th May 2005 were approved by the Committee and signed by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

**188.1 Matters arising**

*Re. 187.2:* The Dean advised that he would bring before the University Council in late June a discussion document on Graduate Schools. The Dean thanked members of the committee for their contributions to the discussion of this topic over the academic year.

*Re. 187.4:* The Dean advised that the Registrar had come back with an alternative suggestion to set up a new M.Sc. ('Taught') degree rather than to create an M.Sc.(Res.) degree. This would preserve the original Masters degree (M.Sc.) for research graduates. The committee noted that an introduction of that proposed new degree would not accommodate the increasing group of graduates of taught masters courses who wish to enroll on another taught masters course with a view to graduating with another taught masters degree.

**188.2 M.Sc. in Clinical Chemistry - a new course proposal (2 year part-time)**

The Dean introduced Dr Gerard Boran (Lecturer in Clinical Biochemistry and Consultant Chemical Pathologist in Tallaght Hospital) who spoke to the circulated proposal to set up a new masters course in Clinical Chemistry. He referred to the programme aims, learning outcomes, target participants, admission requirement, the course structure and syllabus, the programme assessment and examinations and the course staffing and financial issues. The title of the proposed M.Sc. in Clinical *Chemistry* rather than in Clinical *Biochemistry* resulted from the fact that there had already existed a course in Clinical Biochemistry in the Department of Biochemistry, currently discontinued, but which might potentially be reactivated in the future. The Committee supported the new course proposal and advised Dr Boran to explore if the staff from the Department of Biochemistry might be interested to contribute to the teaching on the new course.

**188.3 Course Review of M.Phil. in Medieval Language, Literature and Culture**

The Dean of Arts (Letters), Professor E. Ní Chuilleanáin joint the meeting for this item. The Dean advised that the course had been reviewed in response to the concern of the Dean of Arts (Letters) regarding course teaching and administration. The Dean spoke to the circulated course review report and noted that the reviewers were satisfied that the course had met its aims and objectives, that the curriculum was being regularly updated, that the publicity for the course was suitable and recruitment was rising, that the selection procedures were effective, that the current level of intake was sufficient to make the course viable and the course retention and graduation rates were good, and that the course was financially healthy. The reviewers however expressed concerns that the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (CMRS), which administers the course, did not seem to have its own separate basis and recommended that this be addressed at an earliest opportunity as this lack of a physical location for the CMRS was perceived by both lecturers and students as a disadvantage. They also recommended that the CMRS might consider buying in some

time from an administrative assistant shared with other units to deal more effectively with routine course administration. In relation to the use of visiting staff to teach parts of the course the reviewers found that the students saw this arrangement as problematic in that they experienced significant difficulties with communicating with the external staff and with meeting them during their visits in College. In addition, the CMRS had to face a significant teaching bill for the visiting staff on an annual basis. The reviewers suggested that the CMRS might consider sharing resources between institutions and visiting staff could then be used as a potentially two-way and mutually beneficial example of resource-sharing collaboration. The reviewers emphasised that generally the students had praised the quality of the teaching over the four years of the course operation. The reviewers finally recommended that the finances of the CMRS should be separated from those of the Department of French. An issue of awarding the M.Phil. with distinction was also raised. In a discussion which followed the Dean thanked all the parties involved in the review process for their contribution to it. He explained that by the time the reviewers arrived the course director had changed. It was reconfirmed that currently there was no practice in College to award an M.Phil. degree with distinction but that this recommendation would be further explored with the College.

#### **188.4 AOB**

1) The Committee approved a proposal submitted by Dr Maryann Valiulis, the course coordinator, to change the current name of the M.Phil. course from “M.Phil. in Women’s Studies” to “M.Phil. in Gender and Women’s Studies” as of entry for the academic year 2006/07.

2) The Dean advised that he had been informed by Dr David Tombs, the course director of the M.Phil. in Reconciliation Studies offered by the Irish School of Ecumenics (Trinity College) that the course had been recognised by Universities Ireland (for the purpose of the North-South scholarships 2005) as a cross-border (Dublin-Belfast) one and the only such intra-institutional course in Ireland. The Dean congratulated the course director on such an honourable designation.

3) The Dean thanked all the members of the Committee for their contribution to the meetings this academic year. The Committee would be reconstituted in 05/06 with new members being Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11 am. The next meeting is scheduled for some time in October 2005 (with a venue and a date to be announced at a later stage).



**Prof. Patrick J. Prendergast.**

Date: 20 October 2005