

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 am on Thursday 12 June, 2008
Boardroom, Provost's House

Present: Prof. Carol O'Sullivan, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Dr Joe McDonagh, School of Business
Dr Gail McElroy, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy
Mr Brendan Tangney, School of Computer Science & Statistics
Prof. Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies
Dr Hazel Dodge, School of Histories & Humanities
Dr Kenneth Irvine, School of Natural Sciences
Dr Kevin Tierney, School of Psychology
Dr John Clancy, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Dr Anne O'Connell, School of Dental Science
Prof. Biswajit Basu, School of Engineering
Prof. John Saeed, School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences
Dr Richard Porter, School of Biochemistry & Immunology
Dr Richard Timoney, School of Mathematics
Prof. Stefano Sanvito, School of Physics
Dr Thomas Connor (Acting), School of Medicine
Prof. John Kelly, School of Chemistry
Dr Iain Atack, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics
Dr Matthew Causey, School of Drama, Film & Music
Dr Neville Cox, School of Law
Dr Eoin O'Sullivan, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Mr Michael McGrath, Acting Manager of MIS (*Ex officio*)
Mr Alessio Frenda, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)
Mr Gabriel Magee, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President (*Ex officio*)

Apologies: Dr David Lloyd, Dean of Research (*Ex officio*)
Dr Jacqueline Potter, C.A.P.S.L. (*In attendance*)
Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (*Ex officio*)

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Prof. Seamus Martin, Vice Deanery of Genetics & Microbiology
Prof. Nicholas Grene, School of English
Dr Fintan Sheerin, School of Nursing & Midwifery
Dr Philip Matthews, School of Education

In attendance: Ms Ewa Sadowska, Graduate Studies Office, Secretary to the meeting (*Ex officio*)
Ms Helen Thornbury, Graduate Studies Office
Mr Ronan Hodson, (incoming) GSU President
Ms Alexandra Murphy, (incoming) GSU Vice President

209.0 Minutes of 22 May 2008

The minutes of the meeting of 22 May, 2008 were approved by the Committee as circulated.

209.1 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

209.3 Masters in Theology (3 yr p-t [A]/6yr p-t [B])

The Dean welcomed Prof. Linda Hogan, Head of the Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics, and invited her to speak to the circulated proposal.

Prof. Hogan explained that the Masters is a proposed replacement of the current B.Th. degree, used by the Church of Ireland for the training of ordinands. The current course has been in existence in its current form since 1988 and requires review in the light of two principle changes: the level of qualification of candidates on application (85% of current and intended participants are now honors graduates); and the fact that the majority of applicants already have a level of experience and knowledge of ministry that fits them for study at postgraduate level. Consequently, a Masters level course more effectively serves this cohort by recognising this educational standard. The Masters seeks to offer a distinctive learning experience based on the integration of the fields of theology, biblical studies and Christian practice. Its professional nature emphasises the importance of the integration of the different fields of study, as well as a broad spectrum of approaches to teaching and learning. The programme is framed around a clear interaction between both theory and practice and across a variety of areas of ministerial formation. It aims to maintain a rigorous academic core whilst also broadening the scope of content and assessment to include professional application.

Prof. Hogan drew the committee's attention to a number of atypical aspects of the proposed course such as a) an allocation of ECTS increased to 120 in consultation with the Bologna Desk; b) a 6-year long part-time format (mode B) based on predominantly distance learning on-line delivery, in addition to a 3-year long delivery (mode A), put in place after consultation with the HEA; c) the inter-denominational character of the curriculum, thus leaving the programme open to applicants from all denominations.

The Dean thanked Prof. Hogan for her presentation. In a discussion that followed, a few issues were raised and the following clarifications were obtained:

- a) that even though the programme focused on training for ministry in the Church of Ireland it can be adjusted to cater for any of the Christian churches;
- b) that the prospective students on mode B will be registered in TCD for 6 years but for the last two years they will be predominantly linked to the Church of Ireland Theological College and the School in TCD will not therefore be liable for the student costs under ARAM for those final two years;
- c) that entry to the programme will be on an annual basis;
- d) that the minimum numbers provided in the proposal are likely to be higher than indicated 10 (A) and 15 (B);

The Dean clarified that the submitted proposal was a result of a long series of meetings and consultations between all stakeholders and facilitated by the Registrar. The Committee approved the proposal for submission to the University Council, subject to it being approved by the ARAM Task Force and any other additional amendments that may be required following the assessor's report.

209.4 Calendar Part 2 Regulations resulting from direct admission to the Ph.D. register

The Dean took the Committee through all the proposed Calendar Part 2 changes explaining the grounds for the amendments, clarifying the arising queries and facilitating discussions on various issues raised by the members. The following has been approved:

a) Application (Page 18, §1.6)

Before entry upon research or a course of study leading to a higher degree or postgraduate diploma, application for registration as a graduate student must be made to the Graduate Studies Office or the Course Director, as stated in Prospectus 2007, on the prescribed form, accompanied by the 2007-08 academic year application fee of €48 and two academic references.

To be replaced in full by:

Before entry to a research programme leading to a higher degree, application for registration as a graduate student must be made to the Dean of Graduate Studies or the graduate programme director, as stated in Prospectus 2008, on the prescribed form, accompanied by the appropriate annual academic year application fee and two academic references.

Before entry to a taught course of study leading to a Masters degree or postgraduate or higher diploma, application for registration as a graduate student must be made on line *via* the Postgraduate Applications Centre <http://www.pac.ie/>.

b) Registration for a second degree/postgraduate diploma (Page 19, §1.9):

i) the title *to be changed to:*

Registration for a second degree/postgraduate diploma/additional module(s)

ii) However, when a second course will be of academic benefit to a graduate student through its complement to a first course, the graduate student may make a case to the Dean of Graduate Studies to be allowed to register simultaneously for the second. [...] If permission is granted to register for two courses simultaneously, only one fee is payable, that which is the higher of the two.

To be replaced in full by:

However, when a second course (or an additional module) will be of academic benefit to a graduate student through its complement to a first course, the graduate student may make a case to the Dean of Graduate Studies to be allowed to register simultaneously for the second course (or make a case to the supervisor to be allowed to take up the additional module). [...] If permission is granted to register for two courses (or additional modules) simultaneously, only one fee is payable, that which is the higher of the two.

c) Admission requirement (Page 32, §2.2)

i) the title *to be changed to:*

Admission to the research register

ii) after the current first paragraph *the following to be inserted:*

The University Council approved on 7 May 2008 that from the academic year 2008/09 new research entrants with appropriate academic qualifications are normally admitted directly to year 1 on the Ph.D. register by the Dean of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the applicant's prospective supervisor supported by the relevant Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

Prospective supervisors may recommend on academic grounds that their new research entrants should be admitted to the Masters register on year 1 in the first instance, with a view to undergoing a transfer process to the Ph.D. register normally within the first 18 months of registration. Research applicants may also choose to apply to be accepted to the Masters' register year 1 with a view to submitting a Masters' thesis.

iii) the following sentence at the beginning of the current 2nd paragraph

Applicants not so qualified (*i.e.* those with a lower second class (2.2) honors degree or a grade point average of less than 3.2) will be accepted only in special circumstances and at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

To be replaced in full by:

Applicants with a lower second class (2.2) honors degree (or less) or a grade point average of less than 3.2 will be accepted only in special circumstances and at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

d) *Progress and Continuing Registration* (Page 33, §2.7)

i) At the beginning of the 2nd paragraph the current sentence:

Students are required to attend such courses as are laid down by the Supervisor in consultation with the appropriate Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

To be replaced in full by:

Students are required to attend such transferable and discipline-specific modules as are laid down by the graduate programme director or the supervisor in consultation with the appropriate programme director or Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

e) *Part-time Registration* (Page 34, §2.11)

The following paragraph:

Graduate students on the full-time register who obtain other full-time employment after two years on the Masters degree register or three years on the Ph.D. register may apply in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies for transfer to the part-time register for the remainder of their registration. Such applications must have the written support of the Supervisor. Where transfer is effected, the new time limits apply from the original date of full-time registration. In the case of part-time registration the minimum period of research before a thesis can be submitted will be two years from the date of registration for Masters candidates and three years for Ph.D. candidates and the maximum will be four years and seven years respectively.

To be replaced in full by:

Students on the full-time research register who obtain full-time employment relevant to their research after having completed the first year on the Ph.D. register may apply in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies for transfer to the part-time register for the remainder of their registration, which may not in this case extend beyond year 5 on the part-time Ph.D. register in total. Such applications must have the written support of the supervisor endorsed by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). Students on the full-time research register may not transfer to the part-time register *during or for* the final year of their registration.

f) *Page 35, §2.13 Insert: Confirmation of the continuation on the Ph.D. register*

[& renumber the subsequent sections accordingly]

A stringent process of academic assessment for all Ph.D. students to confirm their continuation on the Ph.D. register shall normally be arranged within the first 18 months of registration extended by a further year for Ph.D. students on the part-time register from year 1. It is to be approached positively and constructively by all parties as an essential part in the student's learning experience.

The Ph.D. confirmation process requires the student to prepare a *Ph.D. confirmation report*; the confirmation report should be written according to the guidelines issued by the appropriate Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). The student must ensure that a draft of the confirmation report is made available to the Supervisor with sufficient time for the Supervisor to read it and provide comments.

The student shall be invited to attend a *Ph.D. confirmation interview*. The *Ph.D. confirmation panel* for each student is appointed by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) and shall consist of at least two members as follows: the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) or his or her nominee, and a second member who should have acknowledged expertise in the subject area of the student's research (or in a cognate field). Members of the Ph.D. confirmation panel may be drawn only from academic staff eligible to supervise (see Calendar Part 2, Section 2.9). Although the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) makes the final decision about membership of the Ph.D. confirmation panel, he or she will consult with the Supervisor before deciding and will endeavour to take into account the student's opinion. The Supervisor shall not be a member of the Ph.D. confirmation panel, but it is expected that the Supervisor (and Co-Supervisors) should be present at the interview. When necessary, an external discipline expert may be appointed. The Supervisor's attendance at the interview ensures that he or she is aware of the panel's critique of the student's work.

Written feedback shall be given to the student as soon as possible after the Ph.D. confirmation interview. The recommendation of the panel shall be one of the following: (a) continuation on the Ph.D., (b) continuation on the Ph.D. register after some minor changes have been made to the Ph.D. confirmation report, (c) continuation on the Ph.D. not recommended at this time: a new report to be written and confirmation interview to be held again as soon as possible thereafter, (d) a recommendation to change to the general Masters register to submit a Masters thesis, or (e) not to continue as a postgraduate research student.

The confirmation of the continuation on the Ph.D. register process shall normally be arranged within the first 18th months of registration extended by a further year for Ph.D. students on the part-time register from year 1.

A student may appeal the result of a Ph.D. confirmation interview. This appeal will be brought in the first instance, to the appropriate sub-committee of the School Executive Committee. A further appeal may be directed to the Dean of Graduate Studies, following Section 1, Paragraph 1.23.

g) Page 35, §2.14 Transfer to the Ph.D. register

i) Delete* and its corresponding footnote at the end of the section.

ii) 1st sentence of the 2nd paragraph:

Usually the transfer process will be arranged in the second year of registration.

To be replaced in full by:

The transfer process shall normally be arranged within the first 18 months of registration extended by a further year for Ph.D. students on the part-time register from year 1.

iii) Insert before the last sentence of the 3rd paragraph in this section:

When necessary, an external discipline expert may be appointed.

iv) point c) in the 4th paragraph to be replaced with

(c) transfer not recommended at this time: a new report to be written and transfer interview to be held again as soon as possible thereafter,

h) Page 38, Section 2: REGULATIONS FOR HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH ONLY

i) the following paragraph

2.17 A student registered for the degree of M.Litt. is required to carry out research in literature, language, philosophy, history, politics, economics, social sciences, psychology, education or other cognate branch of learning.

To be replaced in full by:

2.17 A student registered for the degree of M.Litt. is required to carry out research in literature, language, philosophy, history, politics, economics, social sciences, psychology, education, geography or other cognate branch of learning.

ii) Insert as a separate 3rd paragraph in the section 2.18 the following:

The degree of *Magister in Scientiis (Indagatio)* M.Sc. (Ind.) will be conferred upon students who successfully complete Master in Science research programmes.

j) Page 53, Section 6: SPECIFIC REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT GRADUATE COURSES BY FACULTY

i) Insert as a separate paragraph before 6.(a) section the following:

The degree of *Magister in Scientiis (Studia)* M.Sc. (St.) will be conferred upon students who successfully complete Master in Science taught programmes unless otherwise indicated in Section 7 on Graduate Studies and Higher Degrees listing degree titles of postgraduate courses.

ii) Insert Section 7 on *Graduate Studies and Higher Degrees* [from *Calendar Part 1*: current pages Q1-Q5] and renumber the subsequent sections.

h) Page 191, Section 7: POSTGRADUATE AWARDS AND TRAVEL FUNDS

i) Page 191, §7.1

The following:

The University offers a number of postgraduate awards open for application to students registered, or intending to register for full-time higher research degrees (*i.e.* M.Litt., M.Sc., Ph.D.).

To be replaced in full by:

The University offers a number of postgraduate awards open for application to students intending to register [or registered] for full-time higher research degree on the Ph.D. register.

Regulations to do with Postgraduate Research Studentships [code 1252]

ii) Page 191, §7.6

The 1st sentence of the 1st paragraph:

A number of postgraduate research studentships are offered annually to highly qualified candidates to enable them to undertake postgraduate studies in the University of Dublin.

To be replaced in full by:

A number of postgraduate research studentships are offered annually to highly qualified candidates to enable them to undertake Ph.D. studies in the University of Dublin.

iii) Page 191, §7.6

The two sentences of the 2nd paragraph:

This scheme is open to new applications from new entrants to the full-time research register only. Holders have their studentship renewed annually on the basis of satisfactory progress report, to a maximum of year 2 standing on the Masters register and year 3 standing on the Ph.D. register subject to a transfer approval at the latest during year 3 standing on the register.

To be replaced in full by:

This scheme is open to applications from new entrants intending to register for a Ph.D. Holders have their studentship renewed annually on the basis of a satisfactory progress report, to a maximum of year 3 [4] standing on the Ph.D. register and year 2 standing on the Masters register. Holders who were admitted to the Ph.D. register in year 1 and subsequently transferred to the Masters register in year 2 are permitted to retain the award for that year.

iv) Page 192, §7.8 Conditions

The 2nd sentence

These awards are offered subject to the following conditions: The holders must be new entrants to the research register, engage in full-time research and must be registered for a higher degree in the University of Dublin.

To be replaced in full by:

These awards are offered subject to the following conditions: the holders must be new entrants to the Ph.D. register, engage in full-time research and must be registered for a higher degree of Ph.D. in the University of Dublin.

Regulations to do with Ussher Awards [code 1244]

v) Page 192, §7.10 General

The following

These Awards are awarded to exceptionally well-qualified candidates of outstanding promise. They are open to competition by graduates of any nationality, for research in any branch of learning in the College (subject to availability of resources and competent supervision in the chosen area). The Awards are for a three year period of research leading to a Ph.D. They cover fees and provide a maintenance award of €12,700 per annum. There are six Faculty Ussher Awards in every academic year. Three to be allocated to successful applicants in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, two for the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, and one to a successful applicant in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

To be replaced in full by:

These Awards are granted to exceptionally well-qualified candidates of outstanding promise intending and permitted to register on year 1 for a higher degree of Ph.D. in the University of Dublin. They are open to competition by graduates of any nationality, for research in any branch of learning in the College (subject to availability of resources and competent supervision in the chosen area). The Awards are for a three [four] year period of research on the Ph.D. register. They cover annual fees and provide maintenance of €16,000 per annum. There are six Ussher Awards in every academic year. Three are allocated to successful applicants in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, two in the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, and one to a successful applicant in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

vi) Page 192, §7.11 Conditions

The following:

Holders must be new entrants to the research register and register for a Ph.D. degree (in the first instance on the Masters register with transfer to the Ph.D. register at the earliest opportunity) in the University of Dublin and must engage in full-time research.

Holders have their award renewed annually on the basis of satisfactory progress report, to a maximum of year 2 standing on the Masters register and year 3 standing on the Ph.D. register subject to a transfer approval at the latest during year 3 standing on the register.

To be replaced in full by:

Holders must be new entrants to the Ph.D. register, engage in full-time research and must be registered for a higher degree of Ph.D. in the University of Dublin.

Holders have their award renewed annually on the basis of a satisfactory progress report, to a maximum of year 3 [4] standing on the Ph.D. register and year 2 standing on the Masters register. Holders who were admitted to the Ph.D. register in year 1 and subsequently transferred to the Masters register in year 2 are permitted to retain the award for that year.

j) The committee has accepted a circulated proposal that both award schemes (1244 and 1252) should be extended over the four years on the Ph.D. register by covering the student's annual fee and providing maintenance increases in line with inflation, similar to the arrangements which are made annually by the Staff Secretary with respect to part-time academic staff (on casual payroll) pay rates (*as per* The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting FN/07 - 08/68) Part time Academic Staff – Pay Rates for 2008/09 to approve the proposed increase of 5.1% to part-time staff (casual payroll) with effect from 1.10.2008 as set out in the circulated memorandum from the Staff Secretary dated 28.04.2008). The four-year award schemes with an inbuilt inflationary increase will become a more attractive promotional tool for recruitment of highly qualified Ph.D. applicants to College, by enhancing Trinity's competitiveness nationally and internationally. In addition, College will be honouring its duty of care to students dependent on the award maintenance by off-setting the increasing cost of living caused by inflation on an annual basis.

After some discussion the Committee agreed to subsume into the two extended award schemes the currently separate "One-year Postgraduate Research Awards for Continuing Students" which was set up to specifically address the lack of funding for the 4th year on the Ph.D. register within the existing research award schemes and to provide an opportunity for rising 4th year

Ph.D. students to compete for an additional year's funding to submit their thesis. This objective would be superseded by the extended award schemes. Graduate Studies Committee has recommended that the Dean of Graduate Studies brings the proposal to the Executive Officers, for consideration. The ultimate intention is that annual increases become part of the annual Estimates.

209.5 Any Other Business

a) Dr Eoin O'Sullivan, School of Social Work & Social Policy received clarification from the Dean that the postgraduate studentship was a College award for which all applicants to the research register were eligible to apply on the academic merits of their application, and that the award was only disbursed to successful applicants via the Faculties.

b) The Dean welcomed to the meeting Mr Ronan Hodson and Ms Alexandra Murphy, incoming President and Vice President of the GSU and thanked the current GSU members on the committee for their contribution to the committees' work during the year.

b) The Committee noted and approved the proposed *Calendar Part 2* changes for 2008 as listed in Section B on the agenda (items from 1 to 8).

c) The Committee also approved additional items tabled at the meeting namely

(i) Cessation of M.Sc. in Paediatrics (code 264) as of October 2008/09;

(ii) Deferral of entry to the MPhil in Irish Film, Music and Theatre (code 780) until the academic year 2009/10;

(iii) Deferral of first entry to June 2008 for the Postgraduate Diploma in Conscious Sedation in Dentistry (code 773).

The Dean also expressed her thanks to everybody for their contribution to the Committee's work throughout the year and in particular thanked Mr Alessio Frenda, the outgoing Graduate Students' Union President and Mr Gabriel Magee, the outgoing Graduate Students' Union Vice-President for their fruitful collaboration with the committee. The Dean has invited the members to dinner to mark the last meeting of the academic year.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11.05 am.

Prof. Carol O'Sullivan

Date: 17 October 2008