

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE**

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 9a.m. on Thursday 24th April 2014
Boardroom, Provost's House

Present: Professor Aideen Long, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),

Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Martin Fellenz, School of Business

Professor Graeme Watson, School of Chemistry

Professor Simon Wilson, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Melissa Sihra, School of Drama, Film & Music

Professor Damian Murchan, School of Education

Professor Roger West, School of Engineering

Professor Darryl Jones, School of English

Professor Martine Cuypers, School of Histories & Humanities

Professor Alex Schuster, School of Law

Professor Christer Gobl, School of Linguistic, Speech and
Communication Sciences

Professor John Stalker, School of Mathematics

Professor Orla Sheils, School of Medicine

Professor Anne-Marie Brady, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor Lidia Tajber, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical
Sciences

Professor David Hevey, School of Psychology

Professor Carlo Aldrovandi, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and
Ecumenics

Professor Stephanie Holt, School of Social Work and Social Policy

The Academic Secretary, Ms Patricia Callaghan, CAPSL
Representative (*Ex officio*)

Ms Lee Mills, Information System Services Representative (*Ex officio*)

Mr Ryan Kenny, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)

Ms Sarah Smith, Graduate Students' Union Vice President (*Ex officio*)

Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (in attendance *Ex officio*)

Apologies: Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:

Professor Ebrahim Al Awadi, School of Dental Science

Professor Tim Foster, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Anne Fitzpatrick, School of Languages, Literatures and
Cultural Studies

Professor Anna Davies, School of Natural Sciences

Professor Louise Bradley, School of Physics

Professor Peter Muhlau, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Research (*Ex officio*)

In attendance: Ms Jennifer Hill, Graduate Studies Office, Secretary to the meeting
(*Ex officio*)
Ms Helen Thornbury, Graduate Studies Office (*Ex officio*)

GS/13-14/33 Minutes of 27th March 2013

The minutes were approved by the Committee as circulated.

GS/13-14/34 Matters Arising

The Dean noted to the Committee that the Strategic Plan (**GS/13-14/28**) is being progressed and the document on the education pillar has been submitted.

The Dean informed the Committee that the course proposals for the Masters in Education Studies (Early Childhood Education) (**GS/13-14/29**); Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Studies (Online) (**GS/13-14/30**) and Postgraduate Certificate in Dementia (Online) (**GS/13-14/31**) are all under external review.

GS/13-14/35 Postgraduate Programmes and their Significance in the College's Strategy

The Dean introduced Professor Linda Hogan, Vice-Provost, who thanked the Committee for the invitation to discuss postgraduate courses and the issues associated with budget and concerns about the way in which resources are allocated. She also welcomed the opportunity to talk about the role the Graduate Studies Committee and Directors of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate can play in advancing postgraduate education in College.

Professor Hogan noted that she was aware of the concerns that had been raised at the GSC meeting held on 20th February (**GS/13-14/20** Online Education Initiative and **GS/13-14/22** Processing non-EU Postgraduate Taught Applications) and had tried to address these concerns in her letter circulated at 27th March meeting (**GS/13-14/26**). Since then, budget meetings have been held with 22 out of 24 Schools and most DTLPGs have been present at these and she hopes that part of the broader context has been explained more fully. Prof Hogan then went on to explain that Planning Group has a particular role to "implement" strategy (not to develop) and, in terms of budget, what Planning Group is mandated to do is to allocate current resources within the framework set out by Board. That framework requires Planning Group to bring forward a break-even budget. Recurrent resources have declined significantly in the last few years and Planning Group allocates these based on the principles from Board: money allocated at faculty level and within the faculty each Faculty Dean allocates to each School. Professor Hogan noted that each year a further 1% that previously had gone to non-academic areas (from support and administrative areas) has been reallocated into the faculties and this has meant that the effect on Schools is not as great as it might have been but acknowledged that it is still significant and is also putting a strain on support areas.

Professor Hogan noted that there is a need to generate income from other sources.

She explained that College has been (behind the scenes) doing a lot of lobbying of government ministers, TDs (some of whom are alumni) ensuring they are talking to government about the funding crisis in higher education. The College held

events around the Global Economic Forum - to raise the issue of the financial sustainability of third level education, and to highlight all that the universities are doing to generate non-exchequer revenue.

A concern was raised regarding how, in previous years, any "profits" from course income would have been returned to the School. These benefits have now gone. It was noted that if course numbers drop there is no incentive to increase numbers or to create new courses, whereas when profits came back to the School there was incentive. A suggestion was made to remove the School baseline and create a course baseline which should lead to those running courses being incentivised and in particular those courses running at a loss are encouraged to increase student numbers.

Concern was also raised regarding cut backs in "casual pay" from next year and noted that this is relied on in some Schools for running some courses. Further concern also exists regarding those running course are often new young members of staff who have seen significant drops in salary. Professor Hogan responded to confirm that the plan is to look at every single program to see if they are cost-effective but noted that the decline in the core-grant has meant that 70% of our activity does not cover its costs (since we are not allowed to set or charge a fee) and noted that the impact on the STEM and Clinical areas is even more serious because of the necessary costs associated with these courses.

Professor Hogan advised that Board is considering a proposal which will allow for the circulation of a document that shows the income and expenditure of Schools.

She noted that the most that Schools can realistically expect right now is if they do more they will reduce cuts but is aware that this is not a motivating factor for academics in terms of new courses. A set of profiles is being worked on for each School (at School level not at programme level) to map out a trajectory and those schools moving in right direction will receive a greater proportion of resources. This has to be balanced with the recognition that not every subject area can cover its costs. However there are good reasons why we keep a multi-disciplinary university and why not all Schools or programmes are income generating. A key value of the university is a sense of common purpose and a recognition that not only courses that generate income should be supported in the university. There is a need to balance a number of competing demands and often contradictory values. There is acceptance that we haven't got it right yet and are continuing to engage with Schools to ensure their sustainability. The strategy must be income generation and to do new things with existing resources.

In answer to a query in relation to the lack of non-pay budget and high costs of research projects, for example it was confirmed that there are certain contractual commitments - to staff, licensing for IT, insurance, etc. that have to be covered. Each Dean has discretionary income to allocate to Schools but we have to ask Schools to use resources that are currently within their remit.

Professor Hogan noted that in relation to flexible education and standalone modules the Academic Secretary has developed a business case for EOG to ask for funding for this. The Graduate Studies Committee can take the lead on the policy that can be developed regarding flexible education.

A suggestion was made that we need to allocate resources in a way that supports strategy, that we need incentivisation / direction to motivate the right activity and need budgets that help us to generate income. In response it was confirmed that there is a process available where schools/activities have strategic framework. As an example the Global Relations Office have been allocated significant resources to significantly increase non-EU numbers.

GS/13-14/36 Draft TCD/UCD Framework for Collaborative Taught Programmes

The Dean explained that the circulated document stems from a paper published by the HEA in 2012 (Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape) in which it was noted that Higher Education Institutes should be rationalising their options and helping one another in terms of courses and sharing resources.

The current framework document has been developed in parallel with two others previously prepared between UCD and TCD – one relating to double awards, another to joint awards, and the third to shared modules. However, it was decided to complete this one relating to joint awards as a starting point

The draft document circulated for discussion constitutes a framework that will facilitate the preparation of a proposal for a joint post-graduate taught programme for review by relevant boards/committees at UCD and TCD. The Dean noted that such jointly developed courses would have the same structure as a taught postgraduate programme currently on offer at TCD. For example, there would be a joint programme / course committee appointed from both institutions and a chair to oversee this. An “administrative hub” would be designated as a single point for all administrative matters.

It was confirmed that the assignment of grades and awarding of marks at level of degree at UCD differs to TCD but also noted that the circulated document has an incorrect version of the TCD-UCD Module-Level Marking/Grading Equivalencies table on page 4. Some members of the Committee requested that consideration also be given to looking at these grading equivalencies on a subject by subject basis.

In response to an administrative query regarding students undertaking registration at one institution but requiring two ID cards for access to facilities such as the library, etc. it was noted that a similar arrangement is already in place and works well for the Masters in Development Practice (MDP) programme.

It was clarified that the proportion of fee income to be transferred to the partner institution will be determined at the time each programme is being developed.

Concern was raised that the administrative hub should be decided on a case by case basis as some Schools may not wish to develop a programme that is subsequently relocated elsewhere. It was suggested that the location of the administrative hub should be a local decision, not college level.

It was also suggested that while there is emphasis in the document on the Academic Champion, there should also be an administrative champion and each College should have a facilitator as a “go-to” person.

At a lower level it was agreed that there are some operational logistics still to be worked out, including the process for appeals (which at present differ greatly between TCD and UCD) and guidance on the administrative hub.

It was agreed that written comments should be provided to the Dean and the document would be re-circulated to the Committee followed by review by UCD, if necessary, before the document is presented to Council.

GS/13-14/37 Proposed Introduction of a Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Practice

The Dean introduced Professor Anne-Marie Brady and invited her to speak to the circulated proposal.

Professor Brady noted that in order to advance a Postgraduate Certificate pathway the School had been requested to prepare one joint proposal covering all activities. She advised that the School of Nursing and Midwifery have a consolidated

approach to all of their taught postgraduate programmes and in line with this are now proposing a 30 ECTS certificate pathway across all programmes.

Professor Brady noted that the original intention had been to include three exit points (Certificate, Diploma and Masters) but it was realised that College's current fee system would not be able to accommodate this as it is not possible to request a student to pay a full fee for a Masters programme if their intention is to only complete the Certificate. Therefore a separate entry for the Certificate will be set up as well as an exit point. This allows for an incremental approach for students who may self-fund to pay as they go, plus there is a market for students who already have a masters in one area to gain the additional knowledge without have to do another masters.

In answer to a query on progression it was confirmed that the idea is for students to register and take 30 ECTS and then exit or progress. If progressed, a student could leave with a Postgraduate Diploma, which could later be rescinded (within 5 years) and then go on to take Masters. This (rescinding a diploma to register for a masters) is currently happening but may need to be clarified in the proposal.

The fee structure has been set up to accommodate a student taking the Certificate, coming back and taking the Postgraduate Diploma and then coming back and completing Masters. It was queried whether this takes into consideration that the Masters could take three years and the student could be availing of college services over three years at what seemed like a very reasonable fee. It was agreed that issue would be raised again and confirmed with Paul Coote.

The Committee agreed that this proposal is good idea and saw how this model could apply elsewhere.

The Committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to the above proviso and any additional amendments that may be required following the external assessor's report.

GS/13-14/38 Masters in Psychology (Conversion) course

The Dean introduced Assistant Professor Jean Quigley and asked her to take questions from the Committee in relation to the circulated proposal.

In answer to a query regarding how a failed presentation (as a mechanism of assessment) is dealt with it was confirmed that this would need to be considered and clarified.

It was noted that the award of distinction is not in line with harmonization and regulation should be amended.

It was suggested that text be amended in relation to awarding an exit award as the student is entitled to this if they have passed all taught modules and accumulated at least 60 ECTS but have does not pass or attempt the dissertation (noted difference between not passing and not attempting the dissertation). It was agreed to include additional text in relation to rescinding the diploma.

It was confirmed that there is a market for this course and there should be significant demand as there is only one other course at present in Ireland (University of Limerick) but at least 50 in the UK. The essential point to note is that this is a professionally accredited course.

It was noted that this is a course for students who do not already hold an honours degree in psychology. The title of the course is very specifically "Masters (conversion)" and anyone in the field of psychology would be aware that this is a first qualification.

In answer to a query regarding ethical approval it was noted that further

consideration would be given to whether the student would require both faculty and hospital approval.

The Committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to the above amendments to the proposal and any additional amendments that may be required following the external assessor's report.

GS/13-14/39 Pharmacy (Integrated B.Sc. / M.Pharm.)

The Dean introduced Professor Sheila Ryder and Professor Astrid Sasse and asked them to take questions from the Committee in relation to the circulated proposal.

It was noted that the Library have been in discussions about this course and welcome its introduction particularly as the 5th year is recognised as a Masters year with students registering on a different course code which will assist with ensuring they have the relevant library access.

It was confirmed that the project is essentially the same as in the previous course proposal (**GS/13-14/04**) but the regulations have been tightened as per suggestions from the Committee.

A query was raised regarding whether this is the same course that is delivered by RCSI and confirmed that while it is similar it will be part of an integrated five year programme and each university's 5th year will depend on what has been delivered in the previous four years.

The Dean commented that the document has been well put together and mirrored what had been circulated previously with respect to the MPharm.

The Committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to approval by the Undergraduate Studies Committee and any additional amendments that may be required following the external assessor's report.

GS/13-14/40 International Student Barometer

This item was deferred to the meeting due to take place on 22nd May 2014.

GS/13-14/41 AOB

The Dean advised that she recently met with the Director of Communications and the Marketing Manager (Bernard Mallee and Beibhinn Coman) in relation to increasing exposure/marketing for PG Taught Courses that may be struggling with applicant numbers this year.

Bernard and Beibhinn are committed to doing targeted advertising / marketing for these courses to help increase profile and hopefully result in increased applicant numbers and ultimately an increase in PG student numbers on the course/s.

The Committee was requested to discuss this with their Postgraduate Course Directors and contact Helen Thornbury should they wish to avail of this additional expertise and resource.

Section B for noting and approval

1. The Committee noted and approved the proposal from the School of Drama, Film and Music to offer modules provided for the University of Warwick. Trinity will contribute to this, for fee. It was confirmed that students on the 10 week programme will not be registered at TCD and therefore will not be provided with services such as library facilities.

2. The Committee noted and approved the memo from the School of Nursing and Midwifery to amalgamate the “Cancer Care” strand and the “Haematology Nursing” strand of the M.Sc./P.Grad.Dip. in Nursing – Specialist into one strand “Cancer Care and Haematology Nursing” from 2014/15.
3. The Committee noted and approved the memo from the School of Nursing and Midwifery to request that the International Summer School (Module Code NUMW01) receive academic accreditation as a standalone module. Students will be recorded as having attended but will not be registered (at present).
4. The Committee noted and approved the Calendar Part 2 changes for 2014/15 from the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11am.

Prof. Aideen Long

Date: 24th April 2014