

# School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

## Linguistics & English Language

### Teaching Review Meeting & Staff Student Liaison Committee

#### Agenda

Tuesday, 10 February 2015 at 1pm

Room 7.01, Dugald Stewart Building

#### Present

##### Staff:

J. Fruehwald (SSLC Convenor), C. Cowie, M. Ota, N. Gisborne, B. Remijsen, S. Nicol

##### Students:

E. Kouhi, M. Field, Y. Kementchedjhieva, I. Dew, A. Moseley, J. Strenger, J. Puchowski (LangSoc)

##### In Attendance:

M. Davidson (Minute Taking)

#### 1. Welcome from SSLC Convenor

J. Fruehwald welcomed all those present to the second SSLC of the year and explained that it was a chance to get feedback from each year rep, to understand how courses are running and how they can be improved. At the end of the year there will be a course evaluation survey, anything that has not been said in the meeting can be brought up in the evaluations.

#### 2. Apologies

P. Ackema, R. Cann, R. Collieran, S. King, A. Turk, K. Szymanski, H. Williams, W. Maguire, K. Smith, J. Gafaranga, I. Youmerski, E. Wong, Z. Beisembayeva, R. Bell, D. Hill K. Brown, D. Kerr, D. Vollmer, G. Starling

#### 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes were approved by the Committee.

#### 4. Year 1 Reports and Feedback

Linguistics and English Language 1 (LASC08015)

The year 1 class reps explained that many students were unhappy that results were published publicly on LEARN. Many students know peer student ID numbers as they email one another, so it is not anonymous, therefore everyone can see what result you may have.

S. Nicol confirmed that results will not be displayed in this way again, but also updated the meeting that exam numbers are anonymous.

Students feel that there is not enough time to prepare the second essay for LEL 1 compared to the first essay, as it was assigned 10<sup>th</sup> February and it is due on 5<sup>th</sup> March. The handbook explains when it is due but not when it is assigned.

Students feel the lectures in semester 2 feel less cohesive than in semester 1, this may reflect the current projects or change in lecturers. A suggestion is to have the weekly LCC lectures as a block at the end of semester 2 as the topics change more frequently in semester 2 and students feel more confused.

Some lecturers go too fast and there is not enough time or instruction to review the materials before the tutorials. Some tutors could not answer the questions asked in class as they did not have time to prepare.

There needs to be more information on how to submit first assignments because last semester students did not know how to fill in a cover sheet and many students found Turnitin confusing.

In the last SSLC R. Cann said that he would look into materials from different Universities e.g. past exam papers or extra reading materials and so far nothing has happened. Students feel that in other courses there is much more material to practice from.

N. Gisborne stated that it is unlikely that staff in other institutes would want to share their materials; there might be issues of copyright; and other universities' courses are different from ours. In the textbooks assigned to the course there is recommended reading at the back, this is a good place to get extra materials and there are many past papers archived in the library. Perhaps students were anxious because it was their first university exam period, so they did not know what to expect.

C. Cowie explained that in LEL 1 there have only been two or three papers in the current format but other courses such as social anthropology have many papers as it has been around longer.

M. Ota stated that there will be old exams in Linguistics and English language in the Library but there is not much that can be done about MCQs at the moment.

## **5. Year 2 Reports and Feedback**

The year 2 class reps reported that students feel they are confused about expectations of essay style as they are not familiar with the style of the linguistics essay. Students would like the chance to view an example essay.

N. Gisborne mentioned that for the first time he made an essay writing guide and sent it to all LEL2A students. Next year the guide will be incorporated into the course handbook. N. Gisborne does not want to be too prescriptive about essays as they should be the students own authentic engagement with the topic.

There was a suggestion of having a few model essays with different styles.

C. Cowie suggested a tick box at the end of each essay submission to ask the student if they would allow their essay to be used as an example essay.

M. Ota also suggested a bulk email to the students asking them to come forward with their essay to be used as an example.

C. Cowie stated that in Innovative Learning Week there is an essay writing workshop for LEL 1 and LEL2 students. L. Arnold will make the materials available through LEL 2C in time for the assignment.

Students could not get copies of the Syntax textbook in the library and there were difficulties with accessing digital copies, only certain amount of people can access it at one time.

It was agreed that there needs to be liaison with the Library and there needs to be 150 eBooks of the syntax textbooks available.

Students also mentioned that the careers talk should have been at the beginning of the semester rather than in the middle.

J. Puchowski from LangSoc stated that a research student is helping them to run a study session class which helped LEL 2A for exam preparation. It was set out as a drop in session, for students that had particular areas that they were struggling with to discuss. The final lecture in semantics, the mood and modality lecture was a particular problem as there was no lecture or tutorial therefore students were concerned and thought the revision sessions helped. The sessions are only for pre-honour students at the moment. Philosophy run essay writing workshops and LangSoc think this would be beneficial to take on especially around coursework submissions.

Students did not like that there was no recommended reading for semantics, all the information was in the slides and also for the raising and control topic in syntax there was lack of materials. There is not enough content in the slides for revision material.

N. Gisborne said that he will take this into consideration.

### **Year 3 Reports and Feedback**

The year 3 reps reported that last semester there were too many deadlines on one day, for some students this meant that they had three essays on one day and an exam the next day; this would be 100% assessment for one course in a matter of 2 days. Students would like the opportunity to receive essay feedback before the exam.

J. Fruehwald responded by saying it is hard for tutors to know when other dates for other courses are set. This is something that the Teaching Office should keep a note of and let tutors know if there are too many deadlines for one day.

There are library sessions for 4th years for the Dissertation preparation course, students in 3rd year feel this would be beneficial for honours essays so it would be helpful to have this at the beginning of 3rd year.

J. Fruehwald agrees that having something of this nature for students entering honours would be a good idea.

Students are very happy with the Second Language Acquisition course.

### Sociolinguistics in Bilingualism

Slides do not seem to make sense and there is no theoretical framework, the lecturer discusses examples with no explanation and terminology. The reading list is not sufficient and some weeks there is no follow up reading. Some Students have stopped going to the lectures due to the reasons stated.

C. Cowie reminded the class reps that if students are having difficulties with a course now, then they need to remember to let them know in the course evaluation, so write things down now to ensure things are passed on.

J. Fruehwald stated that the feedback in the SSLC is very good so class reps need to make sure they encourage everyone to fill out the course evaluations.

## **6. Year 4 Reports and Feedback**

The class reps reported that students feel that in one of the mandatory history courses there are three lecturers, two of which are good and one who is disorganized and incoherent.

### LASC10067 – Pragmatics

The feedback for the pragmatics course is that it is widely loved; it is being taught in a new way this year, it has an interactive format of learning. A suggestion is that there is one lecture and two interactive lessons throughout the week.

The lecturer, H. Rohde, uses go vote in class this means that she can answer many questions and gave students some time at the end of class to encourage them to fill out a course evaluation. This may be a good tool to use for evaluation in an efficient manner. H. Rohde encourages students to bring their phones, iPods and laptops in to class to do the questions.

## **7. PG Reports and Feedback**

There were no Postgraduate Reps in attendance.

## **8. Student Rep Guide**

M. Davidson reminded students to have a look at the class rep guide on the website under Student Communities section and encouraged feedback.

## **9. Post Offer Visit Days (POV)**

One more class rep volunteer is required for the Post Offer Visit Days on the 25th March and 1st April in the afternoon.

E. Kouhi said that she would be happy to help.