

Philosophy Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) 2018/19

Wednesday 20th March, 12.30pm

G32, 7 George Square

MINUTES

Student Representation; Year 1: Andrea Gimeno Solaz, Year 2: Siena Wotherspoon, Year 3: Ruby Sullivan and Rebecca Joyce, Year 4: Rebecca Phipps

Staff Representation; Dr David Levy, Dr Brian Rabern

SSLC Convenor: Dr Bryan Pickel, UG Teaching Director

In attendance; Emma Nelson (Student Support Office), Alison Lazda (Undergraduate Teaching Office), Ani Cowe (Undergraduate Teaching Office)

Apologies: Dr Pauline Phemister, Dr Guy Fletcher, Jose Luis Nera (year 2 rep), Freya Gordon (year 4 rep)

1. **Thanks to students for participating in the recent Taught Programme Review** – Philosophy would like to thank the students that took part in the TPR. The TPR was successful and student's feedback and participation was valuable. The TPR report from the review panel and Philosophy's response to this are forthcoming.
2. **Actions from previous meeting**
 - a. BP to help produce a statement on the department's stance on lecture recording policy – **In Progress**
 - b. BP to send the figure from the TPR survey about the number of lecturers offering some form of feedback ahead of assessments to student reps for dissemination – **In Progress**
 - c. BP to raise that not all students have been given the opportunity to participate in a dissertation coffee/lunch with Patrick Todd, the Philosophy Dissertation Coordinator - **Completed**
3. **Year 1 Report**
 - a. Students are unclear as to the structure of the Greats exam, which has changed this year. They would like clearer guidance and a sample paper. **ACTION** – BP and DL to email the Greats course organiser (Dr Pauline Phemister) to ask for a specimen paper to be produced.
4. **Year 2 Report**
 - a. Generally, year 2 students are finding Knowledge and Reality engaging and well structured.
 - b. Some students forgot to hand in the most recent short assignment, as it was due on a Monday while the previous short assignments were due on Fridays.
 - c. Students would like more secondary reading, particularly relating to essay questions.
 - d. Students are unclear as to the structure of the upcoming exam. **ACTION** – BP to email exam guidance to students taking K&R.
5. **Year 4 Report**
 - a. A dissertation supervisor has had to leave Edinburgh suddenly and their supervisees

are unclear what this means for them. The Student Support and Teaching Offices have consulted with Dr Nick Treanor, Head of Philosophy, and Dr Patrick Todd, Dissertation Co-ordinator, about this. Dr Todd has emailed all affected students to let them know the situation. Students who need to speak to someone about their dissertation in the next few weeks should contact Dr Nick Treanor. **ACTION** – BP to speak to Dr Nick Treanor and Dr Patrick Todd about Philosophy’s Policy on transitioning dissertation support in unexpected situations and decide on a course of action.

- b. Students would like some clarity on dissertation marking. DL clarified that dissertations are double marked meaning that dissertations are marked by two independent markers who then discuss any discrepancies in the marks that they have awarded. If they cannot agree then a third marker is brought in.

6. Year 3 Report

- a. Students were unaware that the dissertation proposal deadline was a hard deadline. They are also want to know whether the peer review aspect of the proposal would be anonymous. It was clarified that the peer review is not planned to be anonymous. **ACTION** – BP to talk to Dr Nick Treanor and Dr Patrick Todd about students who missed the proposal deadline and the possibility of making the peer review anonymous in the future.
- b. There was further negative feedback on Philosophy using a standard deadline for all final essays. There is ongoing discussion about this in the department where an alternative is being considered; students would self-nominate to have their deadlines moved forward at the start of each semester. However, Philosophy is conscious that this would leave students with less time to complete assessments and do not expect that many students would want to participate in this.
- c. DL asked student reps whether they believed that there was enough information available about the option of doing two coursework dissertations instead of the independent dissertation. Both the year 3 and 4 reps agreed that they felt there was enough information. The year 3 reps complimented the online dissertation preparation course.

7. The meeting closed at 12.30pm. The Convenor thanked everyone for attending and participating in the Committee this year.

8. Action Points

- a. BP and DL to email the Greats course organiser (Dr Pauline Phemister) to ask for a specimen paper to be produced.
- b. BP to email exam guidance to students taking K&R.
- c. BP to speak to Dr Nick Treanor and Dr Patrick Todd about Philosophy’s Policy on transitioning dissertation support in unexpected situations and decide on a course of action.
- d. BP to talk to Dr Nick Treanor and Dr Patrick Todd about students who missed the proposal deadline and the possibility of making the peer review anonymous in the future.