School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

Linguistics & English Language

Staff Student Liaison Committee

Tuesday, 15 November 2016 at 1pm

Room S38, 7 George Square

Present

Staff:
J.Fruehwald (SSLC Convener) P. Ackema, M. Ota, G. Trousdale, C. Cowie

Students:

In Attendance:
M. Davidson (Minute Taking)

1. Welcome from SSLC Convenor
J. Fruehwald welcomed everyone to the second LEL SSLC of the year.

2. Apologies
B. Los, H. Giegerich

3. Year 1 Reports and Feedback

G. Trousdale explained that the sessions LEL 1 students have is about the skills that you need to research the essay, whereas the BIL students only need to complete an essay in the exam. LEL 1 students are given information on how to conduct an essay and the BIL students are given information on how to conduct an exam (exam essay included).

Students come straight from school, so it would be helpful for students to have a drop in session or a Q&A session to help them with essay writing at University. G. Trousdale is very happy to hold sessions or have sessions in tutorials.

The written exam is 100% assessment for BIL, so students should not be worried about an essay in BIL. G. Trousdale will speak to the tutors who tutor the BIL students to speak to them about essay questions in the BIL exam. Past papers are available in the Library for the essay questions in the BIL exam, so they can get an idea. **(Action: GT)**

Around half of LEL 1 students like the online tutorial work as it gives people a chance to go over work with the tutor. Students who do not like it, prefer to speak to other students in the tutorial groups, as they prefer to learn from their peers.

C. Cowie mentioned that a survey is available about the online tutorial work to see what works and what does not work. Staff are looking into how to improve it, as it is still not the most convenient format for tutors but they want to look out how online preparation is useful. The survey results will be available to LEL 1 students, so it would be good to have a high response rate.

A suggestion for the online tutorial work was for the students to receive and e-copy once students have completed the exercise.

There are still issues with the Learn page, when something is posted in the announcement section there is no link to direct students to the relevant page, this would be very useful. **(Action)**

Students are unaware of the resources that would be useful to them for getting help with work, for example students are unaware of Familing, and it would be beneficial to have a link to Familing on Learn. There should also be more awareness amongst staff about additional support for students.

G. Trousdale announced that there is now an announcement on Learn about Familing.

Additional reading needs to be on one page on Learn rather than in different formats and it needs to show how important the reading is, core reading/additional reading etc.

4. Year 2 Reports and Feedback

LEL2a –
The course handbook is now on a website and therefore the course handbook page is confusing on Learn as the link does not work. Students seem prefer the handbook rather than the website.

It is very hard to find the extension request form as it is not on all Learn pages and if you do not know where to look, then it is hard to find the correct form.

(Action: SSO) – Speak to course secretary about extensions and make it clearer to students.

The reading list button on Learn produces nothing, there is no reading list. This seems to be the case for most courses.

J. Fruehwald will look into this but states that there is an issue with Learn at the moment, especially with the core buttons. **(Action)**

In the syntax lectures there is too much going on and a lot of content to be learned in a short amount of time. Students don't feel they have the basic knowledge to add to the level of syntax they are now being taught and In LEL 1 students had a few general lectures on syntax. The concepts are taught and discussed a rapid pace and is hard to follow.

P. Ackema says LEL 1 should be changing to have more Syntax so that there in LEL 2a there is more of a continuation, so students will have a better understanding.

Lecture notes should be uploaded before the lectures rather than after.

Students feel that in the tutorials there is a lot of good discussion but it would be good to have a general summary from the tutor or an answer/model answer sent out to students after the tutorial.

P. Ackema stated that lecturers often write tutorial notes for the tutors, so perhaps the lecturers could publish the notes after the tutorial, however the lecturers would need to reformulate their notes.

C. Cowie noted that there may be a possibility the notes would then be re-circulated to the next year of students. With regards to the model answer, students may feel that this is the only answer and they should feel that they can form their own answer with their own interpretation.

J. Strenger noted that in English Literature there are ALG's and one person each week has the job of summarising the discussion, this could be a useful tool.

C. Cowie suggested a forum before or after the course, where students can discuss and it would be online, so the notes would be in the forum discussion.

LEL 2B –
Students would have liked to meet the Course Organiser before the first teaching block.

The ear training section is difficult in terms of the content, students needed longer to acquire the skills for the course, as they do not have enough time to learn the symbols. The transition between topics in the first couple of lectures to the next was confusing for students. Co-articulation is mentioned at the end, if this was explained at the start, people would understand that things are not as clear cut.

J. Fruehwald will look at the flow from one topic to the next. **(Action: JF)**

Students would like the lectures to be recorded, it would be helpful to remind students of the contents discussed in lectures. Also it would be useful to know if students can make comments on the Top hat screen for personal use.

J. Fruehwald reported that lecture capture does not appear to have an effect on lecture attendance, there was some consensus about this in the meeting.

5. Honours Reports and Feedback
Most students are happy with their courses.

Most students prefer electronic marking and everyone can understand how to access their feedback. The only issue is that it is not clear that work needs to submit as a pdf rather than a word document, this needs to be put in the guidance.

Students do not dislike the new Learn but each academic uses it differently so it makes it difficult to find things. For example a lecturer puts all the reading in the Lecture notes section, and as they do not have any notes online it is hard to catch up on the work and/or makes it difficult for revising.

There are many deadlines throughout LEL that clash, J. Fruehwald explained that the coordination problem is difficult and it will be discussed at the next LEL staff meeting.

The Speech Processing submission link was not open until the day of submission, so students that wanted to submit work before the day of the deadline could not submit, therefore it would be good to have a protocol in place for when the submission link should open. It would also be good to have a deadline for assigning work and to know when assignments will be released.

J. Fruehwald stated that he would put this forward as a strong recommendation rather than create a protocol/policy, the only reason for the hesitation is because the staff tend to suffer from too much policy. It will be brought to attention at next staff meeting. **(Action: JF)**

English Word Formation is a good course but there is not a lot of helpful material on the Learn page, there is nothing to revise from, only from notes taken in class.

In First Language Acquisition the new lecturer does not record the lectures and many slides are picture only, so it is difficult to write notes. It would be good if notes could be provided for revision purposes.

There is some negative feedback on some of the tutors, for example one of the tutors spent one of their tutorials on the phone for a personal call.

Students prefer the handbook in the previous format rather on the website.

Students suggested it would be good to choose your own format of assessment and wondered if that would be possible. Unfortunately, this would not be possible as the course assessment is sent to a committee and the assessment needs to be signed off before the course begins.

6. Student Information Sessions
No discussion

7. Minute taking in SSLC's
No discussion

8. AOB