

Faculty of Natural Sciences Masters Student Staff Committee

Date: Tuesday 15th June 2021

Time: 12.30-14.00

Location: via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present:

Chiara	Riedel-Loria (CRL)	Chair and GSU Academic and Welfare Officer (Masters)
Rebecca	Middleton (RM)	Faculty Education Manager
Matt	Horsfield (MH)	Secretary and Education Support Coordinator
Magdalena	Jara	GTA Programme Leader and Head of Pedagogy, Graduate School
Ella	Robson (ER)	Student Experience Coordinator, Mathematics
Sai	Yoghananthan	Student Experience Coordinator, Mathematics
Travis	Schedler	PGT Representative, Mathematics
John	Seddon (JS)	Faculty Senior Tutor
Mike	Tennant	MSc Programme Director, Centre for Environmental Policy
Mike	Tristem	Silwood Park Master's Coordinator, Life Sciences
Kenny	Weir (KW)	Programme Director of Postgraduate Studies, Physics
Rudiger	Woscholski	MRes Director of Studies, Chemistry
Ao	Aodeng	Chemistry: MRes Bioimaging Sciences, Student Rep
Elliot	Bairstow	Life Sciences: MRes Tropical Forest Ecology, Student Rep
Michaela	Flegrova (MF)	ICU Deputy President (Education)
Anthony Wai Tung	Chong	Chemistry: MRes Nanomaterials, Student Rep
Tesni	Collins	Life Sciences: MSc Applied Biosciences & Biotechnology, Student Rep
Justin	Cui	Physics: MSc in Optics and Photonics, Student Rep
Zhonghe	Feng	Physics: MRes Photonics, Student Rep
Lukas	Verikas	Mathematics: MSc Statistics (Statistical Finance), Student Rep
Leonard	Rosen	Mathematics: MSc Statistics, Student Rep
Hili	Zaum	Chemistry: MRes Drug Discovery and Development, Student Rep
Jingxuan	He	Physics: MSc in Optics and Photonics, Student Rep
Hayley	Jackson	Life Sciences: MRes Structural Molecular Biology, Student Rep
Lewis	Jackson (LJ)	Physics: MSc in Physics, Student Rep
Duncan	Lee	Chemistry: MRes in Catalysis, Student Rep
Chloe	Lieng	Life Sciences: MRes Molecular and Cellular Biosciences, Student Rep
Seb	Newell (SN)	Life Sciences: MSc Taxonomy Student Rep
Ben	Nouhan	Life Sciences: MRes Computational Methods in Ecology and Evolution, Student Rep
Leonie	Stroemich (LS)	Chemistry: Graduate Student Union's White City Officer, Dept Rep
Lukas	Verikas	Mathematics: MSc Statistics, Student Rep
Bridget	Shidok	Physics: MSc Security and Resilience: Science and Technology, Student Rep

Apologies:

Will	Pearse	PG Senior Tutor at Silwood Park, Life Sciences
Henry	Rodriguez-Broadbent	Department Rep, Mathematics
Richard	Thompson	Co-Chair and Vice-Dean (Education)
Shubha	Talwar	Department Rep, Life Sciences
Arash	Mostofi	Department Rep, Mathematics
Emanuel	Tewelde	Mathematics: MSc Pure Mathematics, Student Rep
Tancredi	Schettini Gherardini	Physics: MSc in Quantum Fields & Fundamental Forces, Student Rep
Adam	Richardson	Physics: MSc in Quantum Fields and Fundamental Forces, Student Rep
Niki	Gounaris (NG)	Life Sciences: Director of Postgraduate Studies, Student Rep
Celina	Chien	Life Sciences: MRes Tropical Forest Ecology, Student Rep

Heather	Hetschkun	Life Sciences: MRes Biosystematics, Student Rep
Samuel	Henderson	Life Sciences: MSc Ecology Evolution and Conservation, Student Rep
Mirrah	Bashir	Life Sciences: MSc Applied Biosciences & Biotechnology, Student Rep
Michael	Parsey	Physics: MSc Security and Resilience: Science and Technology, Student Rep
Sam	Bishop	Physics: MSc Security and Resilience: Science and Technology, Student Rep
Nerea	Montes Perez	Life Sciences: MRes Ecology Evolution and Conservation, Student Rep
George	Sabin	Life Sciences: MRes Systems and Synthetic Biology, Student Rep
Freddie	Wilkinson	Life Sciences: MRes Ecosystem and Environmental Change, Student Rep
Anne	Dell	Head of the Department, Life Sciences
Nazia	Hirjee	Faculty Operations Officer
Urte	Adomaityte	Mathematics: MSc Applied Mathematics, Student Rep
Molly	Clark	Life Sciences: MRes Molecular Plant and Microbial Sciences, Student Rep
Babette	Fourie	Life Sciences: MSc Ecology Evolution and Conservation, Student Rep
Lintong	Li	GSU Vice President (Representation)
Sophia	Mexi-Jones	Physics: MSc Security and Resilience: Science and Technology, Student Rep
Oana	Popescu	Chemistry: MRes Chemical Biology and BioEntrepreneurship, Student Rep

1. Welcome and Apologies

CRL welcomed all and apologies as above were accepted.
Confirmed that the meeting was being recorded on Teams.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2021

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting held on 10th February 2021.

3. Matters arising from the minutes and Review of Action Tracker

The action tracker was reviewed, and all actions were marked as:

Action 4 – NG was not present so action would be followed up outside of meeting. Mark as ongoing.

Action 5 – KW confirmed action was complete and resolved for next year.

Action 6 – JS confirmed action was complete and heard back from two departments.

4. Senior Tutor's verbal report

- JS confirmed that the Faculty has recruited two Student Wellbeing Advisers, who will be in post in early July.
- JS reported the College Mitigating Circumstances (MC) Policy was going under some minor modifications due to the pandemic. Registry would circulate the updated regulations in due course.
- JS reminded the committee of the emergency contract procedure which was approved by Senate in Autumn 2020 and is now live. More details can be found [here](#).
- JS reported that the College already has a Fitness to Study procedure and further communication about this process would be circulated by the registry in due course. More details can be found [here](#).
- JS reminded the committee the Faculty has two safeguarding officers, Angela Kehoe and JS. Any issues should be directed to either officer.

5. Reports from Department Student Representatives:

5.1 Centre for Environmental Policy (CEP)

The detailed report document was noted by the committee and CRL presented the key matters arising from the report.

- Positive feedback from staff about student engagement in the spring elective modules. Students felt there was a good selection of elective modules available. Some concern from students that module leaders were not easy to contact, and

that the module content and timetable was not clear. CRL confirmed that this was raised to the department and was no longer an issue.

- CRL explained that students struggled with the new elective modules and would benefit from a clear module structure to distinguish between each elective module.
- CRL noted that the department was helping organise social events for students and CRL encouraged other reps to do the same for their department.

5.2 Chemistry

The detailed report document was noted by the committee and LS presented the key matters arising from the report.

- LS reported that at the recent SSC department meeting, there was lots of positive feedback and students were pleased to be able to access the labs.
- The reps in the department were looking into organising a social event for the students in early August.
- LS confirmed there had been discussions about MCs and the students were advised to submit individual MCs if required, due to the missed sessions of lab work.
- LS noted that students had been querying about their final thesis presentations, and if they would take place in person or online.
- LS asked members of the committee if they had access to any up-to-date guidelines on organising any student events with the Student Union. CRL would follow this up with LS.

5.3 Life Sciences

The detailed report document was noted by the committee and SN presented the key matters arising from the report.

- SN queried about students who were working in the National History Museum (NHM) and if they could apply for an extension via the MC process as the labs in the NHM were operating a difficult Covid-19 policy.
- SN reported that students were not offered any feedback from their exams and they would appreciate module feedback on the exams to see where they did well and where they could improve.

ACTION 7: SN to email RM about his two questions relating to students working at the NHM/ exam feedback. RM to then email the department and Director of Postgraduate Studies.

5.4 Mathematics

No student representatives were present. ER confirmed the department SSC was delayed but provided some information which had been discussed.

- Students had reported that they had found the online exams too long and difficult and they had changed a lot from previous papers. Would have found some mock papers useful in preparation.
- Some students had found studying from home isolating and would prefer more engaging problem classes (e.g. doing unseen problems so that discussion is stimulated).
- Students had reported that they found Piazza and revision classes as very useful and were happy with the modules offered in their programme.

5.5 Physics

The detailed report document was noted by the committee and LJ presented the key matters arising from the report.

- Students reported that they found the exam length not long enough and needed more time to complete the online exams. LJ confirmed this was being investigated by the department. KW confirmed the department are investigating these issues for next academic year.
- LJ explained that at the previous committee, students had reported poor communication between the department and students. LJ confirmed this had improved but would appreciate a clearly defined structure of the course in the course handbook to include key dates across the academic year.
- LJ reported students were keen to come to campus to meet their peers. They were looking to organise a social event in the summer.

6. Wellbeing

CRL reported the following wellbeing notes:

- Covid-19 cases were on the rise on college campus' and reminded students to be aware and follow the safety rules.
- Social events could now be organised on campus and encouraged all student reps to look into organising their own events or attending ICU events.

7. Chair's business

- CRL reminded the committee that the digital education recording policy was approved for next academic year. More details can be found [here](#).
- CRL reminded all student reps that they should start to plan for a handover with their successor next year.

8. Minutes of PG Departmental Student Staff Committee Meetings (to note)

The committee noted the following minutes:

8.1 Chemistry PG Departmental Student Staff Committee Meeting minutes.

RM reminded department staff to email minutes to MH as secretary.

9. Any other business

- LS raised her concerns about organising social events. MF explained that students will need to go through the ICU risk assessment process. RM advised LS to go through the ICU and they can advise on event organisation and risk assessments.
- RM congratulated CRL on her role as chair for her final committee.

10. Dates of Future Meetings

Committee	Date	Time	Call for Papers	Paper Deadline
FoNS - Masters Student Staff Committee	01/12/2021	12.30 – 14.00		
FoNS - Masters Student Staff Committee	09/02/2022	12.30 – 14.00		
FoNS - Masters Student Staff Committee	14/06/2022	12.30 – 14.00		