Minutes

Of the 2nd Michaelmas MURC meeting,
23 November 2018

Those present were:

- Nathaniel Cleland
  (St Anne's rep)

- George Cooper
  (Outreach rep,
  Balliol rep)

- Chris Fitzpatrick
  (President,
  St Peter's rep)

- Matthew Goh
  (Maths & Stats rep,
  Queen's rep)

- Edward Hart
  (Secretary,
  Corpus rep)

- Matthew Hillman
  (Treasurer)

- Tao Jiang
  (Magdalen rep)

- Christopher McGarry
  (IT Officer,
  Merton rep)

- Jesse Pajwani
  (New rep)

Apologies received:

- Marianne Cain

- Gregory Stewart

- Jess Toudic

All action points are in **bold**.

1   Previous minutes and matters arising

Matthew clarified the number of MMathStats students who had been docked marks and the reason why students should be told why they have been docked marks.

> The minutes were approved as amended.

2   President's report from Teaching Committee

- Teaching Committee (TeachCom) agreed to change the name of Introduction to Manifolds. They will suggest "Multivariate Analysis and Geometry" to faculty. MURC agreed that, currently, there is not enough geometry in the course to justify the "and Geometry" in the title. **This should be mentioned at JCCU.**

- Lecture capture still has problems and will remain unavailable in to next term.

- TeachCom agreed all the Department's teaching materials should be in public domain. They had been accidentally put behind a Single Sign-On wall. They are now public and will demonstrate the quality of the Oxford maths course.

- Archived materials will be made public again. The IT team had assumed they were published in error and did inform the Department when they un-published them. The Department has asked they be made public again.

- A survey has been sent out on mindset and exams. **MURC reps should encourage people to fill it in.**

- A working group for gender analysis has formed.

- A recent push for the MPLS division to pay minimum wage to students on summer projects caused issues this summer and is behind the delay in the release of this year's summer projects.

- The NSS survey got 27 responses. Chris F. suggested that the results were thus insignificant and they be ignored. The Department was asked by the Vice-Chancellor to promote the survey, which they did. TeachCom says MURC are free to send out a counter-email in future.

- TeachCom noted that most MMathPhil students can do 9 or 10 maths options, unless they're doing 3 philosophy options. This is concerning because it means they don't have the same leeway as other students.

- TeachCom discussed the issues with Part C classes (included those raised at JCCU). TeachCom agreed to spread first classes over weeks 1-3 and to encourage lecturers who haven't shortened sheets to shorten sheets. 45-minute workshops will be reconsidered at the end of year, but only in response to feedback.

- All but 3 or 4 people got their first choice of Master's dissertation title this year. This was thanks to supervisors being quite flexible and putting on more classes than they had to.

- However, statistics dissertations had more issues: the supervisors didn't have the time to put on extra classes. This issue is related to the inaccuracy of this year's Statistics module survey.

3 President's report from JCCU

Most issues were mentioned above. The remaining things to report are:

- The Department will look into how they can report penalties on finalists' work. They want to provide more information, they just need to see what university regulations permit.

- Richard Earl said they'd consider Part A Specimen Solutions. There was no update on this at TeachCom.

- The suggestions of consultation sessions in Hilary term and of Part C Problem Sheet 0 classes were rejected. They though they were a nice idea, but there is no room, no money and no time for them.

- The Department agreed to indicate Prelims mocks as good practice to tutors.

- The Department can't do anything about the Part A exam schedule. This is because the maths cohorts need to be in Ewert House and because they are scheduled centrally by the University.

4 Suggestion for online system for lecture notes

Joseph Double suggested the Department create a Google-Docs-like service where students can leave public notes and annotations, so that they can request corrections and ask for

clarifications. This would be good as then students can confirm errors reported by others or suggest where others' misapprehensions come from. It would also mean students (and lecturers) can more quickly resolve problems with lecture notes.

The meeting was ensure what advantages this had over the usual emailing of lecturers. It also noted the system would be expensive. The advantages further reduced if the system was reduced to just a website for reporting errors. Lecturers should already try to communicate errors they've been informed of and/or fixed.

In any case, students are encouraged to use multiple resources, which should help them get around ambiguities and errors in lecture notes.

The meeting agreed not to bring this suggestion to JCCU.

5 Elections

Nathaniel Cleland stood to be Maths & CS rep and was elected unanimously.

Jesse Pajwani was nominated as Arts Officer and was elected unanimously.

6 Any other business

6.1 Bank account

MURC bank account has been closed due to inactivity. We can reclaim it. We need to set up a new account and transfer it over. **Will look into what exactly we need to do and report at the next meeting.**

6.2 Standing orders

Chris McGarry asked for the Standing Orders to be published on the website. It is odd they are referred to in the public constitution but are not themselves published.

The meeting unanimously approved the IT Officer to publish them.

6.3 Prospectus

Chris F. asked if anyone wanted to get involved with the Draft MURC Prospectus. Any contribution is good: thoughts on alegbra-y, topology-y courses; courses which work well today, things you enjoy particularly and why; graphics, etc.

6.4 Bios and photos for the website

Chris reminded the meeting to send bios and photos to put on the MURC website.

7 Items to take to JCCU

The next meeting is in Hilary Week 3, after the next MURC meeting, so there are no items to note for now.