

Faculties of Mathematics, Computer Science & Statistics Joint Consultative Committee with Undergraduates

Friday 29th October 2010

Minutes of meeting

Present: Mr Henry Bradford (*MURC President*), Mr Ben Hoskin (*MURC Secretary*), Miss Rosie Cretney (*MURC Open Day Co-ordinator*), Miss Petra Staynova (*MURC Maths & Phil Rep*), Miss Shu Zhou (*MURC Maths & Stats Rep*), Mr Joseph Chittenden-Veal (*MURC 4th Year Rep*), Dr Peter Neumann (*Faculty Teaching Advisor*), Ms Louise Sumner (*MPLS*), Miss Elena Sizikova (*MURC Maths & Comp Rep*).

In attendance: Mrs Helen Lowe.

Apologies: Dr Richard Earl (*Admissions Co-ordinator*), Mr Alex Harrison (*MURC Treasurer*), Dr Neil Laws (*Statistics*), Ms Josephine French (*MURC Questionnaire Rep*).

1) Minutes of previous meeting

- a. Dr Neumann asked Mr Hoskin to thank Mr O'Keeffe for writing the minutes, which were accepted without amendment. *NB: Subsequently Mr Hoskin discovered that Mrs Lowe had been responsible for the minutes, thanks were re-directed appropriately.*
- b. Matters Arising:
 - i. Item 3a – Dr Neumann reported that permission had been granted by the City Council and University for the new building, and that building work was expected to begin in due course.
 - ii. Item 4 – Mr Bradford reported there had been a disappointingly low rate of response to the survey, and that a new method of distribution would have to be devised. The responses will be examined for the Trinity Term JCCU meeting.
 - iii. Item 8 – Mrs Lowe reported that two French classes were being run, and one German class in conjunction with the Computing Laboratory.
 - iv. Item 4 – Mr Bradford mentioned the issue of model answers, which was deferred.

2) Membership of the JCCU

- a. The members of the Committee introduced themselves, and apologies were heard.
- b. Mr Hoskin promised to inform Mrs Lowe as to the identity of the First Year Rep, as soon as this was ascertained and also the names of the new MURC committee following the elections in week 7.

NB: The following students were elected to the MURC committee.

President: Ben Hoskin

Treasurer: Young Hyun Choi

Secretary: Chan-Young Song

Maths & Phil Rep: Petra Staynova

IT Officer: Samiha Ismail

Open Day Co-ordinator: Jamie Potter

Publicities Officer: Vacant
Questionnaires Rep: David Hagger
Maths & Comp Rep: Elena Sizikova
Maths & Stats Rep: Jamie Potter
First Year Rep: Young Hyun Choi

- 3) Report on Matters Raised in Examiners Reports
 - a. It was noted that the reports were now available on the MI website.
 - b. Miss Cretney inquired as to whether or not students earning a First in their third year were expected to get a First in the fourth. Dr Neumann said that he recalled there only being a correlation between the two.
- 4) Reports from the meetings of the Faculty/Teaching/Academic Committees
 - a. Dr Neumann said that Prof. Woodhouse was retiring at the end of December, and that the Faculty had expressed a preference for Prof. Howison (*Christ Church*) to replace him.
NB: Prof. Howison's appointment has now been approved.
 - b. Dr Neumann reported that Professor Howison was now Chair of the Mods/Part A review, and that the Mods section was almost complete, and should be ready for publishing in 2011. However, it could be delayed as Part A plans have to be quite advanced before it can be finalised. In addition, there were some issues with Numerical Analysis, and how easily the Mods structure can be adapted for Mathematics and Philosophy Students.
 - c. Ms Sumner mentioned that the Division saw the provision of sample answers as desirable and recommended that departments provide a small number of sample answers which could include examples of 1st class standard and 2.2 standard answers. Tutors would explain to students how the answers differed. However, it was not thought advisable to produce a large number of sample answers. Dr Neumann said Teaching Committee had decided to look into it, and that it was easier to do in core subjects, and harder in Parts B and C. Dr Luke would investigate further. He also reminded the committee that it was sample, rather than model, answers that were being discussed.
 - d. Dr Neumann reported that the Faculty and Teaching Committee had proposed that the entry level for Part C be increased from 2.2 to 2.1. Students not achieving 2.1 standard or higher would be able to appeal to a special committee for permission to continue to Part C. A change to the classification method at Part C was also being considered. The proposal was that a more conventional Masters classification of Distinction, Pass, Fail be adopted. It was noted that both of these proposals would need to be considered by the Division.
- 5) MURC Business
 - a. Mr Bradford raised the issue of the timing of lectures; both that many lecturers ignored the guidelines about beginning and ending five minutes off the hour, and that Mathematics and Philosophy students still had to race across the city several times a week.
 - i. Miss Staynova echoed these sentiments, saying the problem was especially significant for first and third year students, and that she had many complaints. She suggested rescheduling, ending lectures at ten minutes to the hour, or organised transportation, as alternatives.

- ii. Dr Neumann suggested Miss Staynova produce a paper for Teaching Committee on the subject, and said that rescheduling was very difficult, as Maths & Philosophy spanned two schools, and the Museum was not continually available. Mrs Lowe pointed out that the new building should make timetabling easier, though Dr Neumann pointed out that it would be still further away from the Philosophy Faculty. On the other hand, the philosophy lectures should also be moving northwards shortly afterwards.
 - b. Mr Bradford also asked whether or not the Summer Essay Contest had been discontinued. Dr Neumann said it had only been suspended, and hopefully would return; Mrs Lowe explained that there had been a lack of personnel.
- 6) Questionnaires
- a. The responses to the Trinity Term questionnaires were generally positive. In response to a question by Mr Hoskin, it was explained that written comments (on the reverse of the sheet) were especially helpful.
- 7) Open Days
- a. Dr Earl passed on his thanks to MURC for help during the Open Day, and Dr Luke her thanks to Mr Bradford and Miss Cretney for their help during inductions.
- 8) Application figures (for matriculation in 2011)
- a. Mrs Lowe presented the application numbers for the coming year. (attached below).
- 9) AOB
- a. There was no other business, and the meeting was closed

BHH, 12/12/2010

Application Figures for 2011 Matriculation (with 2010 figures for comparison).

	2011	2010
Mathematics	1131	1046
Maths & Stats	209	194
Maths & Phil	97	104
Maths & Comp	102	91
CompSci	148	148
Total	1687	1583