

Mathematics Undergraduate Representative Committee

Third Meeting of Michaelmas Term • Minutes of Meeting

27th November 2015

Present: Alex Homer (President, Maths&Stats Rep, Oriel College Rep), Brigitte Stenhouse (Secretary, Publicity & Careers Rep, Somerville College Rep), Haengeun Chi (Treasurer), Nick Williams (Maths and Philosophy Rep, Arts Rep), Utsav Popat (Maths and Computer Science Rep), Tim Hosgood (Questionnaire Rep), Naomi Vides (D&I Rep), James Lau (Outreach Rep), Natasha Davey (Fourth-Year Rep), Henrique Aiguar (First Year Rep), Sam Davies Udina (Worcester College Rep), Ste Rose (Balliol College Rep), Anthony Landau, Andrew Tweddle, Yue Hui

Apologies for absence: Liam Stigant (IT Rep)

Meeting began at 13.00

Minutes and Matters Arising

1. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting were **accepted** with 4 abstentions, 2 nos, 7 yeses

2. Annual Report

Alex : Some details to be changed, such as the outreach rep didn't give talks on MURC but gave talks on the department at the open day. **Passed** with 2 abstentions, 11 yeses.

3. History of Maths Meetings

Brigitte : Peter Neumann and Christopher Hollings on board, aiming to have the first meeting in 1st week of HT 2016.

General Business

4. College Rep elections

Brigitte Stenhouse resigned as Somerville Rep.

Nominations were opened for the position of Somerville College Rep. Andrew Tweddle nominated himself. They assumed the position.

Nominations were opened for the position of Hertford College Rep. Naomi Vides and Tim Hosgood nominated themselves.

Naomi – Went to a meeting as proxy for Alex out of own initiative, she wants to encourage people to care and get involved. Tim – Running to make it a contested election. No questions for candidates.

Naomi was **elected** with 12 votes, 1 abstention.

Nominations were opened for the position of Trinity College Rep. Anthony Landau nominated himself. They assumed the position.

5. Teaching Committee Report

Alex: A minor change is a change that is a rearrangement/rewording/less than three lectures change of material. Anything else is a major change. If you request to sit a paper under old regs, a new paper will be made for major changes. Colleges will be obliged to help students who sit courses that have undergone minor changes. Prelims and core courses strongly recommend to sit paper under new regs.

Might film some lectures eg Intro to maths for outreach purposes. Naomi: OUSU are pushing for every subject to film every lecture and put them online. Trial is going well. Alex: Don't have the resources to film all lectures at the moment.

Alex: Survey is being sent to all third years from Good Practice Committee, Gender question is state your gender identity 'blank box'.

6.UJCF Committee Meeting

Naomi: Departmental Peer supporters, going to recommend all departments have peer supporters.

Action Point: Alex will email dr earl to check that this recommendation has been made.

OUSU want Lecture capturing to be a core service, wants a push from all departments. **Action Point: Naomi to send out a presentation on myth busting regarding .**

Discussed how ridiculous it is that exams have mistakes, but no solution to this was suggested

Can't pass practicals or apply for classes until you have filled out a questionnaire. However would have to swap to a fully online system

OUSU want to try and bump response percentage to Student Barometer.

7. Stats Department Meeting

Alex: Now in stats your project supervisor will be one of the two people marking your project. Issue that there would be no anonymity. Often there aren't enough people with a specialism to mark a project and someone else to supervise it. Will always be two people marking the paper. James: will that break proctors regulations? Alex: No. Msc students projects already not anonymous, they put their name on.

Changing part C course in stats, genetics is staying, networks is staying, course on graphical models, bayes methods. Advanced simulation might stay depending on getting postdocs to teach it.

8. Arts Committee

Nick: Has been postponed until next term.

9. Lecture Questionnaires

Tim: Action Point: To email Janet Dyson to organize discussion of lecture questionnaires.

10. Fourth Year Workload

People not in fourth year perceptions – too big. Ste has been asked to report back that it is too big by someone in his college. Alex: Would this put you off fourth year? General consensus, no probably not. However it was noted MURC is a skewed sample. Alex: This is the first term that he has felt the workload is too high. One tute sheet was published three days before the deadline, and the only change is that the sheet is longer. The sheets aren't long, but the questions have little guidance or hints, and take a lot of time. No time, dissertation focus has slipped. James – Knows of at least one person who left before fourth year because the workload was too high. In 2011/2012 functional analysis, only 2 more questions than now. This was when they were doing 2 fewer courses. Alex – Seems that mostly only the optional questions have been dropped. Tim – positive thing, homological algebra tute sheets are on point. He is a visiting lecturer. Sets aside time after lectures for questions. Brigitte – Perturbation Methods, can't possibly shrink the sheets without shrinking the course, but the sheets are far too long. Natasha – 'Going to lecture until I run out of time, and anything I don't cover is non-examinable' seems a good way to go. However workload has been far too high. Alex – we need specifics to give to the department. Which courses need to shrink, and which courses are going well. Similar feedback exercise **Action Point: Natasha will send round a feedback form for fourth years to college reps (and tutors of colleges without reps), and ask for specific details of problem courses. College reps then anonymise responses and pass them on to Natasha.** Tim – We need to quantify responses, as opposed to just saying fourth year is 'too workload heavy/hard'.

Alex: Trying to get data on reasons why people leave after 3rd year. (Jobs, low grades etc) This is also first year £9000 tuition fees.

11. Mirzakhani Society Rep

Alex: Have never worked with Mirzakhani society, does it make sense to explicitly invite someone from the Mirzakhani society to these meetings and add a position to the exec? Nick : Might increase outreach. Issues about gender balance are very pertinent to MURC. Natasha: We are pulling in the same direction, it might be nice to extend an Olive Branch Tim: Would give them an opportunity to work more closely with Department. **Action Point: Alex to ask Dr Earl if they can have a presence at JCCU. Haengeun to initially email president of MS to invite to MURC meeting without mentioning JCCU.**

Any Other Business

Drop In Sessions

Haenguen: Drop In Session with MURC. Thoughts? Nick: Certainly try it. Haenguen: Can we pay for teas and coffees out of MURC account? Consensus: Yeah.

Congratulations to Alex Homer on being a wonderful President

There being no further business, the meeting was concluded at 1:56 pm.

BS 06/12/2015

