

Mathematics Undergraduate Representative Committee

3rd Meeting of Hilary Term (8th Week, 2016) - Minutes

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Haengeun welcomed the meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

2. Students taking six courses

It was reported from Teaching Committee that nine students had expressed interest in taking six courses, four of whom were achieving distinctions, against the intention of the program.

It was suggested that members of the undergraduate body shouldn't be restricted from taking an extra course for a number of reasons: including exam results potentially not reflecting ability in a way that could be acknowledged by tutors, and not wanting to unnecessarily restrict students.

3. Lecture feedback

It was noted that feedback forms had been handed in.

4. Midterm reviews

It was reported that midterm reviews had been agreed to be brought to Faculty meeting, with an intention to start this in MT.

It was asked if there were opinions on the formatting of the midterm questionnaire.

It was asked if there would be an end of term questionnaire, it was agreed that there should be.

It was suggested the questionnaire be open and informal and consist of very few questions, but steered towards long term issues with the course rather than issues such as quiet speaking, and other issues that can be corrected by a tactfully delivered comment.

It was asked whether this would be online or handwritten; it was suggested that handwritten would be better, although both may be preferable.

It was suggested that online questionnaires would be better to avoid disrupting lectures. It was asked if people use the online questionnaires currently.

It was noted that absentees from lecture courses have stopped going to courses because of poor lecturing, and hence have the most important feedback. It was agreed that using both formats is a sensible compromise.

It was suggested that duplication may be an issue on an online form. It was responded that this would not be a problem for such a small scale program with the purpose of this one.

5. Peer support within the department

The Department agreed to liaise with OUSU for peer support within the department.

6. Recording lectures

MPLS meeting agreed with the IT department that the software platform could be used to upload recorded lectures, however the logistics of capturing the lecture is the department's responsibility. This was discussed in Teaching Committee, who opposed capturing all lectures, but wanted to showcase some lectures for outreach purposes.

It was responded that this missed the point, as not all people can go to lectures, and this was meant to increase accessibility to the department. It was noted that it has been argued that this may discourage lecture attendance.

OUSU have reported that more people attend lectures after they have been recorded.

It was asked why not attending lectures and watching online is inherently worse than attending lectures.

It was suggested that online lectures would assist students in attending lectures after missing a few lectures.

It was also noted that these would be useful for the purpose of revision.

It was agreed to be raised at JCCU, with a discussion of Exec to occur to bring together a strong and cohesive argument.

7. Subfusc in BSP

Teaching Committee discussed subfusc in BSP, who noted that there isn't much that can be done, however they would agree to discuss this with other committees in the future to discuss the possibility of removing gowns for BSP.

It was reported that more than 90% of BSP students reported that they would be happy wearing a commoner's gown. It was asked what the sample size was; it was approximately fifteen students. It was asked how many had Scholar's gowns; this wasn't known.

It was asked what MURC wanted to happen regarding approaching students who disagreed.

It was offered that the suggestion should be made without active encouragement. It was noted that a suggestion may still be interpreted as pressure on students.

It was agreed that the suggestion would be made.

8. MURC Bank Account Signatories

It was noted that MURC now has an account. Yay. However the old signatories are on the account and must be changed, and HSBC have asked for a motion to pass this.

The motion was passed to make Haengeun, Ste, and Charlie signatories.

9. Lecture quality

It was noted that some lecturers are bad. It was asked what happens when lecturers are bad on the department's end.

It was responded that lecturers receive feedback, and the lecturers meet with Janet Dyson to discuss the feedback with the rep. It was noted that in one occasion a lecturer has been removed.

It was suggested that lecturers be restricted to one fourth year course in an academic year to limit the impact of poor lecturers. It was asked how this would affect good lecturers.

It was suggested that it would be an acceptable consequence of limiting the number of bad lecture courses, which can severely impact one's degree.

It was also noted that in fourth year courses there may be few faculty members able to lecture the course competently, and hence this would limit the number of available courses, and it was suggested that this would not be worth limiting the number lecture courses in order to avoid poor lecturing.

It was noted that this was raised at JCCU in Michaelmas, and that the response was that there were no lecturers who receive consistently bad feedback. It was suggested that we check this against records.

It was noted that the concern of the department when hiring faculty was research rather than lecturing.

It was agreed to ask the questionnaire rep to investigate whether there were lecturers who receive consistently bad feedback and what the department has done in response.

10. MURC Social events

People want pizza and board games. This would have to occur next term due to the logistics of finding an available space.

People were pleased by the idea that these occur simultaneously.

11. Meeting scheduling

It was noted that meetings used to occur in 2nd week and 7th week before introducing a third meeting. It was asked how people would like timing MURC meetings. It was noted that there has to be a meeting between Wednesday 2nd week and Friday 3rd week for a meeting to address Teaching Committee and prepare for JCCU.

It was noted that the 8th week turnout was high.

It was suggested that an ad hoc approach was appropriate.

12. Online Lecture questionnaires

It was noted that online lecture questionnaires are difficult to find, **and it was suggested that MURC chase this up before the end of term.**

13. Elections

Lewis was elected college rep of Teddy Hall.

14. Flow chart fun

It was asked if a flow chart should be drafted to allow undergrads to plan options. **It was agreed that this be done over Easter.**

The meeting was adjourned.