

**PWYLLGOR YMGYNGHOROL I STAFF AC  
IS-RADDEDIGION**

**STAFF STUDENT CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE**

Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher 6 Mawrth 2013

Date: Wednesday 6 March 2013

Amser: 2.15

Time: 2.15

Lleoliad: Ystafell Gorllewin,  
Adeilad Gwleidyddiaeth Ryngwladol

Place: West Room,  
International Politics Building

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***MINUTES OF THE STAFF STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE***

<b>Present:</b>	Lucy Taylor	Chair/Director of Undergraduate Studies
	Huw Bennett	Deputy Director of Undergraduate Studies
	Kris Stoddart	Deputy Director of Undergraduate Studies
	Judith Shepherd	Academic Administrator
	Annie Carruthers	Undergraduate Secretary/Minute Taker
	Joe Worthington	First Year Representative
<b>Apologies:-</b>	Ben Holihead	Second Year Representative
	Andras Lederer	Third Year Representative
	Henrik Jenssen	International Students Representative
	Brieg Powell	Welsh Medium member of teaching staff
	Lillian Stevenson	Library Representative
	Sebastian Balcombe	Second Year Representative
<b>Absent:-</b>	Grace Burton	Third Year Representative
	Sophie Davies	Joint Honours Representative
	Jacob Ellis	Welsh Medium Representative
	Jonjo Robb	First Year Representative
	Lukas Brueck	Exchange Students Representative

## **1. Welcome and Introduction from the Director of Undergraduate Studies**

Dr Lucy Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that there were a few absences this is possibly due to the Guild voting. Dr Lucy Taylor explained that staff in the department had taken on different roles, for example Judith Shepherd had become Departmental Administrator, Glesni Davies had become Academic Administrator and Annie Carruthers had taken on Glesni's previous role of Undergraduate Secretary. Lucy Taylor also added that she had been approached by Sam Griffiths to nominate Student Representatives for NUS SSCC Wales' Course Rep of the Year and Lucy had nominated Grace and Jacob.

## **2. Matters concerning Information Services within the University**

There was no representative from the library present at the meeting. It was noted that Lillian Stevens at present is absent and that it would be possible to forward a written statement if necessary. The Committee were informed that Dr Huw Bennett is now a library representative for the department and he will be having a meeting with Lillian on 11 March 2013. Andras Lederer mentioned that being able to access 80% of the compulsory reading is not enough and that staff aren't able to upload readings onto Blackboard and some books which have not been ordered by the library. Ben Holihead inquired whether there had been a change in the University licensing in regards to Blackboard. Huw Bennett stated that the law hasn't changed, it has only been applied as there is a risk of external readers looking at it and PowerPoint's that contained Google images would have to be taken down due to copyright infringements.

## **3. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24 October 2012 (enclosed)**

It was confirmed that the minutes from the last meeting were correct.

## **4. Items from the Director of Undergraduate Studies**

**a)** No further items arising from October minutes

**b) i.** The arrival of Dr Brieg Powell was discussed. It was announced that the Department is currently advertising for five new members of staff: one at Chair level, one in Global Health and three other open appointments. As the department is actively recruiting staff at present, appointment start dates should September/October 2013. It was noted that ten to twelve modules should be available each Semester and that the provisional registration meeting would be held on 20 March 2013 and that online provisional registration (via online 'student record') will 'open' on 18 April 2013 for approximately two weeks – details to be emailed later in the semester. Andras Lederer raised the issue of student evaluation and Lucy Taylor stated that it has been done electronically in the past although it has since moved towards the paper version - this is successful – more of a response from students. Andras noted that he brought this issue up because he believes a few elements on the electronic evaluation that could be changed, i.e. to numerical data.

**ACTION:** Dr Taylor to email students with details of the provisional registration meeting shortly.

ii. Lucy Taylor asked the panel to respond to a Part One module on Study Skills. It would be possible to try to integrate Study Skills into the Seminars of (IP104) therefore all students would have to participate. It was noted that Study Skills would aid those students who were unsure how to write an essay or reference correctly. Lucy asked the Student Representatives what their views were on this idea. Henrik commented that he would prefer it if Study Skills weren't incorporated into any important modules. Joe thought it was a good idea but wanted it to be taught on its own. Andras remarked that a number of students struggle with how to use the library and how to locate and read articles/journals. Huw Bennett noted that there were three different options in regards to Study Skills: 1) Making it optional – this will prove challenging as some students won't go 2) To integrate it into a module 3) To provide 20 credits just on Study Skills. Lucy Taylor asserted that Study Skills would have to be integrated with a module in order to incorporate it into an intellectual environment. Other suggestions by Student Representatives included: utilise the last week of term as a period to teach Study Skills and to possibly teach it during seminars.

iii. Lucy Taylor asked the panel what would be useful to discuss during the first meeting of the dissertation sessions for second years. Firstly Andras commented that it would be beneficial for students if they were taught about methodology and suggested a methodology and research module. Kris Stoddart added that students were more than welcome to speak to the academic staff at any time if they had a query regarding their work/research methods.

iv. This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

c) i. In regards to examinations, Andras raised the issue of the University's attitude towards exam and graduation timetable. Furthermore, it was noted that the exam timetable was not only late but some modules were missed off completely. This made it hard for international students to arrange their travel home.

ii. Andras inquired as to whether the University were going to revise their decision regarding late submissions. Lucy Taylor responded stating that the Dean has been made aware that some students are paying a high price for being a minute late and that this concern should be logged into the minutes. In regards to the penalties, a vast majority did manage to get their essays in on time and this in turn made a difference to marking. However, Lucy Taylor warned that students should not be aggressive, as a result of this penalty, to the support staff who take in their essays.

## **5. General matters raised by the Undergraduate Students**

General items raised previously in meeting.

## **6. Matters raised by First Years Representatives**

Joe stated that first years had probed as to whether lecturers could put their PowerPoint slides up on Blackboard prior to the lectures. Huw Bennett commented that this would raise a concern within the academic staff that nobody would then go to the lectures. Joe added that some staff do not put slides up until two or three weeks after their lectures. Lucy Taylor indicated that all staff would be alerted of this issue. The issue raised by Joe was that Freshers wanted to know about Dissertations in order to work on them over the summer months. In response to this it was decided that the

lectures on Dissertation for second years will be recorded. It was also decided that module conveners will be asked to pick five books to help students contextualise each subject (over the summer).

**ACTION:** Dr Taylor to contact staff reminding them of Blackboard 'minimum presence'.

### **7. Matters raised by Second Year Representatives**

Ben noted that all lecturers should ensure that they are in their office during office hours. It had been observed that the Office Hours for Semester Two had yet to be put on Blackboard. Ben's second query was if there will be any funding available from the Department for students who wish to do an Internship. Lucy Taylor replied that financial resources will be located in Institutes and that it would likely involve an application process that will decipher how the money is to be spent.

**ACTION:** Department to update Blackboard and web information regarding office hours, essay deadline etc. and make sure staff are aware of importance to be available during office hours.

### **8. Matters raised by Final Year Representatives**

Andras issued a complaint involving clashes in deadlines – essay deadlines coincide with the Dissertation deadline. Huw Bennett stated that time management – managing multiple skills- would be a necessity when in the work place. Lucy Taylor added that there was no resolving this for this year, however it will be taken into consideration for next year. Andras asked whether the Department has thought about separate alumni/library for Inter Pol itself – Lucy Taylor will pass this on to the Department.

### **9. Matters raised by Welsh Speaking Representatives**

No representative present.

### **10. Matters Raised by Joint Honours Representative**

No representative present.

### **11. Matters raised by International Students Representatives**

Inter Pol tie requested – advised to speak to Elaine.

**ACTION:** International Politics student representatives to discuss tie options with Elaine Lowe [ell@aber.ac.uk](mailto:ell@aber.ac.uk)

### **12. Any other business**

Meeting adjourned at 16:25