

**Department of Economic History**  
**Graduate Staff-Student Committee Meeting**  
**11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 3pm in CLM B05**

Present: Tracy Keefe (MSc Programmes Manager); Joost Le Blansch (EH (R)); Vincent Lindner (EH (R)); Chris Minns (Deputy Head of Department (Teaching)); Sebastian Schoettler (EH (R)); Mitja Schulz (GH (EM)); Amal Shahid (EH (R)); Yina Wu (GH (EM))

Apologies: Frederick Laevens (EH); Aleksandra Milonova (PELD); Tirthankar Roy (MSc Programmes Director)

1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies:

Tracy Keefe welcomed everyone and briefly outlined the purpose, duties and responsibilities of the committee. All present introduced themselves.

2. Elect Chair:

Joost Le Blansch was elected.

3. Election of Representatives for Other Committees:

Yina Wu and Sebastian Schoettler agreed to share responsibilities as representative to the Consultative Forum for Taught Masters Students.

4. Report from Deputy Head of Department (Teaching):

Chris Minns as Deputy Head of Department (Teaching), and MSc Programmes Director (2013-14), brought the committee up-to-date on on-going issues from last year and asked members of the Committee to think about proposals to modify the MSc programmes in light of the disappointing number of courses available for 2015-16. In particular, he wondered whether students would prefer more full-unit courses which would ensure that the taught element was sufficiently varied (this could be achieved by joining two half-units).

After some discussion, the main concerns from students were whether:

- This might cause more clashes
- Outside options might be more attractive
- How this would affect Erasmus Mundus students

Chris Minns agreed to put together a proposal to be circulated before the next meeting.

5. Student Issues:

- 'Shopping' week: Students wondered whether it could be extended to give them time to attend seminars first? Tracy Keefe explained that a big problem with the 12-month Masters is getting students in and settled quickly so extending the time students had for course choice was not really a good idea. Talking Heads videos were discussed as that might be a way for students to find out more about particular courses before they made their choices.
- Welcome party: Students had appreciated the party and enjoyed meeting students from across the department. Tracy Keefe said she hoped that we could repeat the event nearer to the end of term.

- Dissertations: It was noted that students on the Research Track did not feel that ~~EH497~~EH496-7 was mentioned in the Dissertation Sessions (that it wasn't applicable to their situation), and the students wondered whether they could schedule additional time for group study. Tracy Keefe agreed to speak to Tirthankar Roy about the sessions, and was trying to find a room for group study
- Dissertation titles: Some students felt that their supervisors were pushing them too early to fix on a title/topic for their dissertations. Others felt that it was never too early to begin thinking about them. However, it was agreed that advice among supervisors was not consistent.
- Reading week: Everyone agreed that it was a good idea and that they had benefitted from the time.
- Exams: Some felt that having exams in Lent Term was not a good idea because it cut into holiday (and thus, revision) time. Others felt that it was better than waiting until Summer Term. All students agreed that a split assessment would be appreciated, but the exam schedule should be released much earlier.
- EH426: Students noted that the room was still overcrowded. Those who were not used to the computer programme did not feel they were getting the time necessary to practice with it.
- EH401: There were mixed feelings about this course. Although it was mentioned that it might be too challenging for some, it was also felt that the overlap between other courses was beneficial overall. It was noted that there was an Anglo-American focus.

Tracy Keefe agreed to speak to Tirthankar Roy before bringing the above points to the Chair of the Departmental Teaching Committee for discussion and action (where appropriate).

#### 7. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that, unless necessary to hold a meeting sooner, Tracy would liaise with Joost to look for dates at some point in Week 5-6 of Lent Term and circulate details nearer the time. It would also be nice if someone doing the programmes that were left unrepresented this time, could attend the next meetings.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.15pm.