

Department of International History
Postgraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee Meeting
12 November 2015, NAB.8.02

In attendance:

Professor Janet Hartley (Head of Department)
Dr Kirsten Schulze (Masters Tutor)
Dr Roham Alvandi (LSE-CU Programme Director)
Dr Tim Hochstrasser (LSE-PKU Programme Director)
Dr Gagan Sood (teacher responsible for HY423)
Milada Fomina (MSc Programmes Administrator)
Rebecca Lawrence (SSLC rep for MSc Empires, Colonialism and Globalisation)
Piyali Mandal (SSLC rep for MSc in Theory & History of International Relations)
Yuk Yiu (Tommy) Tsang (SSLC rep for MSc in International Affairs)
Laurel Waterhouse-(SSLC rep for LSE-CU)

Topics Addressed:

1. Review of Minutes from last meeting.
 - A. Meeting Minutes from 14th May 2015 were approved and there were no matters arising.
2. Reform of Academic Adviser System:
 - A. Prof Hartley asked for student feedback on how to improve student advising within the current system.
 - B. There was discussion on how best to gather feedback from students. It was suggested that SSLC reps could help to gather student input from their respective programs.
3. Program Specific Items:
 - A. Empires Program
 - a. Rebecca raised concerns about the Empires Course. Specific concerns included exam preparation, overemphasis on Europe, and overall course structure.
 - i. Dr. Sood responded to these concerns and offered suggestions for exam preparation and navigating the course.
 - B. Theory & History of International Relations Program
 - a. Piyali noted that students in the program feel the program title is misleading because of the program's strict focus on history. Students are also concerned that they are getting shut out of IR courses and events.
 - i. The Department will look into how many students get rejected from IR courses.

C. CU-LSE program

- a. Laurel noted there were some student concerns about assessed class participation and Teaching Fellows teaching core courses. The latter concern has been resolved.
- b. Dr. Alvandi asked about use of the Dual Degree room in Sardinia House. He floated the idea of swapping the DD space with the space used for research students.

D. PKU-LSE program

- a. Tommy brought to the group's attention that students in PKU-LSE feel that the two programs are not integrated. Many students have struggled with the adjustment to LSE and feel more guidance would be helpful.
 - i. Prof. Hartley suggested the possibility of doing something with next cohort prior to October to help ease the transition.
 - ii. Dr. Schulze suggested creating Student Survival Guide similar to that of CU-LSE program.

4. Welcome week, Induction, Course Signup, Timetables.

- A. Issues with timetables aside, positive marks were given for professors being helpful to students who arrived late. Positive marks were also given on clear presentation of the advising system.

5. Reading Week

- A. Dr. Schulze asked for general feedback on the usefulness of reading week. The perception is that in general it has been useful for students. There was also an observation that many non-assessed essays were due during week 7.

6. LSE Education Strategy Document

- A. Prof. Hartley proposed using the document to start a departmental conversation about expectations for Masters' Programs. There was discussion about how best to go about this.

7. Further concerns.

- A. Dr. Alvandi noted there was some sense of panic among students about dissertation topics and finding potential supervisors.
 - a. It was suggested that in the future students could be reminded that they should have a clear topic in mind before seeing a potential supervisor. Students can also be prevented from signing up before a certain date to avoid concern about the supervisor cap.
- B. There was a request for student lockers.
 - a. Prof. Hartley will follow up on this.