

# Oxford University Department of Materials

## Academic Committee

**DMAC 16 Minutes of the Academic Committee** held at 2.15pm on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2003 in the first floor Committee Room in 21 Banbury.

**Present:** GT (Chair), AC, SGR, JPN, JMS, RIT, PRW, APS LJFJ.

1. **Apologies:** JTC

2. **Minutes of DMAC 15**

The minutes of DMAC 15 were approved with the following corrections:

*Minute 6h.* The last sentence should read "... The Oxford –Princeton Research fund."

3. **Matters Arising**

*From DMAC 15, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2003.*

- a) *Minute 6a.* In future, The Corus Prize will be a fixed date in the lecture timetable with wider advertising.
- b) *Minute 6f.* The Options Classes have now been ratified for payment at the higher rate and will be added to the next published list of ratified classes
- c) *Minute 7.* GT has submitted the Regulations to the Divisional Office. The changes to the MEM regulations have been submitted by Divisional Office to the Honours Schools of Economics and Management for approval. No problems are foreseen.
- d) *Minute 9.* RIT reported on the E(M)EM Working Group and Standing Committee re. the proposed changes to the EEM course. The Department of Economics has not yet confirmed that it is willing to accept the teaching arrangements for the proposed new EEM course, and the Department of Engineering Science has not yet decided finally on its format. In the immediate future, the EEM course will remain as a Joint Honours course. It was agreed that MEM will be able to continue as a Joint Honours course much as before for the immediate future provided it fits in with the courses offered for EEM in terms of timetabling and course structure.
- e) *Minute 10.* Dr. Kirkland had agreed to the proposals suggested by the Committee.
- f) *Minute 11.* A response to the issues raised in the I.A.P. Meeting, May 2002 has been drafted.
- g) *Minute 13.* GT tabled a paper (DMAC16/05) further expanding the minuted responses to a new T.A.P Scheme.
- h) *Minute 15a.* LJFJ reported that the IAUL courses are not open to graduate students but that the IAUL does run Departmental courses for graduate students at no cost to the Department, providing the Department can provide a suitable room and refreshments.
- i) *Minute 15b.* LJFJ had contacted Jenny Nix and is awaiting further information on the Department of Physics' procedures before drafting a method for the interviewing of second-choice applicants.
- j) *Minute 16a.* SGR reported that the EPSC had stipulated that the EMS course cannot be closed to 2004 applicants, and that the formal procedures to close a course must be undertaken in order to close the course to 2005 applicants.
- k) *Minute 16b.* LJFJ has contacted Dr. Emily Boswell from P & G, and is awaiting further news re. their commitment to the proposed prize.

From DMAC 15(a), 13<sup>th</sup> February 2003.

- l) *Minute 3a.* Any Industrial visits taken in the first year cannot be used as coursework for the Part I examination in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. The Committee agreed that the attendance at the visits is a requirement of the course, rather than compulsory.
- m) *Minute 3c.* GT reported that Dr Treve Willis thought that the Entrepreneurship course was a good opportunity for the students to learn how businesses function. He suggested that the students are given a list of suggested titles for their business plan.  
[GT spoke to Dr. Steve New from the Said Business School after the meeting. Dr. New felt that the word limit of 3,000 words was appropriate and that a lower limit could increase the difficulty of the coursework as students tried to fit in as much detail as possible using appendices, tables and figures.]
- n) *Implementation of the Changes.* The Subfaculty has been consulted, by email, on the proposed course changes. The majority of replies had been positive. GT, as Subfaculty Chairman, answered queries without further responses and therefore deemed the proposals carried. Overall, the Subfaculty had agreed to the changes.
- o) *Minute 5b.* GT & LJFJ had spoken to the Divisional Office re. the Course changes, the Divisional Office had agreed to help with these changes and to try and ensure that the changes are in *The Examination Regulations 2003*.

#### 4. **Divisional AC Report (GT, DMAC 16/03)**

- a) *Minute 3b.* All further requests for increased payment were on hold until the Department of Physics has had an answer concerning its request for increased payment for class teaching/marking.
- b) *Minute 5.* LJFJ agreed to draw up the Department's admissions criteria to fit the Division's template, and to submit this to RIT/AC for approval. **Action: LJFJ**

#### 5. **Practicals**

- **Changes to the Practicals (JPN, DMAC 16/04)**

Making the first term of practicals more like the Crystallography Classes in organisation. This will mean the students simultaneously doing the same experiment if possible (subject to budget limitations).

- Encouraging the Senior Demonstrators to be more proactive.

It was agreed that the second year practicals should remain unchanged, subject to course changes.

JPN agreed to canvas suggestions from the DC and then produce a more detailed plan, with a view to implementing the changes in MT 2004. **Action: JPN**

#### c) **Undergraduate Practical Reports**

The Committee is concerned re. the length of time students are taking to write up each practical. The Committee agreed to the following:

- First year students should take no longer than 4 hrs outside the practical class to complete their write-ups.
- Second year students should take 2-3 days completing the practical, with most of day 3 spent writing up, plus an additional maximum of 4 hrs outside class time to be used for the write-up.

JPN agreed to email all students and senior demonstrators the above guidelines for the practical write-up. He will remind also all concerned that marks are awarded for both completing the practical, and answering the questions correctly. **Action: JPN**

## 6. Implementation of Proposed Course Changes

### a) Changes to the published Examination Regulations

A draft of the proposed changes is almost complete. The final copy will be prepared in association with Jenny Nix from the Divisional Office.

**Action: GT**

### b) Team Design Project

This will be run in its new format in MT 03. All details will be in the Course Handbook.

### c) Industrial Visits

It was agreed that if a student undertakes a voluntary industrial placement, this can count towards the quota of required industrial visits, provided the short report is on Company stationery and is signed by their line-manager. In addition, one industrial visit can be submitted from the industrial tour.

### d) Informing JCCU

GT agreed to inform the JCCU of all the proposed changes in the TT meeting.

## 7. Lecture Course Changes (APS/SGR/AC, DMAC 16/05))

The Committee thanked the working group for their paper on suggested reductions in the lecture load and content of the core course. However, after much discussion, it was felt the changes were too radical, and imposed too heavy a burden on the lecturers concerned, to implement them in time for the next academic year. The Committee agreed to ask lecturers of core courses to reduce the content of all core courses by 10%, addressing the suggestions for rationalisation in the attached document. GT agreed to inform the lecturers of this decision.

**Action: GT**

## 8. Changing Delivery of MEM Courses

This paper was held over to DMAC 17.

## 9. Any Other Business

Prof. John Pethica has requested that Dr. Christiane Norenberg gives the 1<sup>st</sup> year 4 lecture course "Ceramics & Semiconductors" in TT. LJFJ agreed to inform RMP re. the matter. **Action: LJFJ**