

## Oxford University Department of Materials Academic Committee

**DMAC 21 Minutes of the Academic Committee** held at 2.00 pm on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2004 in the first floor Committee Room of 21 Banbury Road.

**Present:** GT (Chair), HEA, AC, PRW, JMS, AOT, APS.

**In attendance:** LJFJ.

**In attendance for part of the meeting:** SGR, Miles Waring, Chair of the JCCG, & Markus Mittermaier, Chair of the JCCU.

1. **Welcome:** The Committee welcomed both Dr Adrian Taylor, the new Director of Studies and Chair of DMAC w.e.f DMAC 22 and Dr Peter Wilshaw, new member for Hilary and Trinity terms 04.

2. **Apologies:** none.

3. **Minutes of DMAC 20**

The minutes were accepted.

4. **Report from the Chair of the JCCU** (Markus Mittermaier)

There were four items for report by the JCCU Chair.

- a) *Library.* MM informed the Committee that the Academic Librarian has been given a list of books to be added to the Library.
- b) *2<sup>nd</sup> year Tensors course.* The JCCU have requested that either the course be lengthened from 4 lectures to 6, but that the course content be kept the same, or that a problems class be run alongside the lectures to assist students to undertake the tutorial problem sheet. The Committee agreed to consider the problem, and review the arrangements for delivery of the course. **Action: AOT**
- c) *3<sup>rd</sup> year Options course Optoelectronics Devices.* LJFJ reported that as Secretary to the JCCU, she had alerted the HoD that the Optoelectronics classes had yet been given. Prof. Smith has contacted the lecturer concerned on this matter. The incoming Chair agreed to chase the matter further. PRW volunteered to give the classes if required. AOT agreed to inform the HoD that DMAC considered the situation as unacceptable. **Action AOT**
- d) *Industrial Tour to Munich.* The tour will take place in 9<sup>th</sup> week and cost between £130 - £150 pp. DMAC thanked MM for his successful organisation of the tour.

5. **Report from the Chair of the JCCG** (Miles Waring)

The incoming Chair of the JCCG, Miles Waring reported to the Committee on two items.

- a) *Library.* The JCCG have asked the Academic Librarian to liaise with the RSL over the availability of books on the Open shelves.
- b) *Workshop.* The JCCG have requested that the opening hours of the workshop be reassessed. The current arrangements are 14.00 – 16.30 M – Th. DMAC agreed the matter should be referred to the appropriate Committee with a recommendation that the workshop be open for longer hours in a more concentrated distribution, with more flexibility. **Action: GT/AOT**

## 6. Matters arising

- *Minute 4(a) Library* LJFJ has emailed students and staff re. library access.  
*Minute 4(a) Divisional Learning and Teaching Strategy* – LJFJ has sent the information to JAN.
- *Minute 5 Membership of DMAC (GT)* Dr Wilshaw has agreed to join the Committee for the next two terms. The Subfaculty will be balloted during TT for replacement members of DMAC and the Graduate Panel to cover sabbaticals. **Action: AOT/GT**
- *Minute 6(b) Practical Schedule (GT/JPN)* GT reported to the Committee that the HoD has confirmed that senior demonstrating should take priority over other Departmental Committees and meetings and that Linda Curson, Area Safety Officer, has established that the SD does not need to be present in the laboratory at all times.

The new batch system of practicals mean that SDs will be offered either one 2<sup>nd</sup> year practical slot, two 1<sup>st</sup> year practical slots or in the TT only, one afternoon per week as with current practice. In the Michaelmas and Hilary terms, practicals will run over a two-week period, with 2<sup>nd</sup> year practicals taking 3 days and 1<sup>st</sup> year practicals two. Each year group will be split into 2 cohorts, with each cohort in the Teaching Lab on alternate weeks. SDs will be responsible for one practical for 6 days over a two-week period, or 8 days over two fortnights. Marking will need to be completed outside demonstrating hours. The Trinity term will contain those experiments that cannot be run as batch form, e.g. the TEM experiment run by Drs Jenkins and Hutchinson. The PCO, JPN will be responsible for the scheduling of the practicals as normal.

After much discussion, the Committee requested that clear guidelines be drawn up between the Chair of Subfaculty and the PCO, JPN, over the minimum time commitment required from SDs during a practical. The Committee also requested that the information be presented to the Subfaculty for further discussion.

**Action GT/JPN**

- *Minute 7 Graduate Admissions Procedures* AC will present this at the Subfaculty meeting in wk 5 of Hilary term. **Action: AC**
- *Minute 8 Accessibility of Practicals (JPN)* This item was held over and is awaiting further advice on SENDA from the Division. **Action: JPN**
- *Minute 10 Sabbatical Leave Cover* AC informed the Committee that KAQO'R will be unable to teach the whole Option course in full. The matter was held over to DMAC 22.
- *Minute 11 QAA –Advice on Student complaints (LJFJ/GT)* – awaiting Guidelines from the EPSC.

## 7. Divisional Academic Committee Report

- Rolling 5-year Plan.* The Division is concerned about the number of UG college places required across the Division.
- Review of OUCS.* The Committee highlighted the work of OUCS in the area of virtual learning environments and putting lecture notes on the web. The Department does not use these facilities, at the moment.
- Wireless Technology.* The University is planning to switch to wireless technology, and two Departments within the Division are participating in a pilot scheme on this matter.

- d) *Camera-Ready Copy*. The Proctors are ruling whether examiners should get higher rates of pay for preparing camera-ready copy examination papers.
- e) *Advanced Degrees*. The Bioinformatics course is a 3-year MSc, where the students are unmatriculated for the first year and take a diploma, in the last two years the students matriculate and are awarded an MSc.  
the Division has set the level of competency in English for non-native speakers at graduate level entry at the lower level, with an “under normal circumstances” caveat attached.
- f) *Institutional Audit*. No further information had been given following the Audit team’s initial visit at the end of January.

#### 8. Report from Chair of Tutors’ Committee

The Chair of the Tutors’ Committee confirmed that, in TC HT04, the Tutors’ Committee confirmed that academic induction for undergraduates took place in all the Colleges offering MS/MEM.

#### 9. Review of 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Options (SGR) (DMAC 21/2)

SGR presented a range of possible ways to update the 3<sup>rd</sup> year course. The Committee thanked SGR for his initial work on the topic. After much discussion about the disadvantages and advantages of suggested new schemes, the Committee asked SGR to produce a more detailed paper for a new 3<sup>rd</sup> year course that incorporated the following ideas:

- Lectures should be arranged into 3 blocks (each block representing one paper), students will take 2/3 possible papers. Each block should contain 32 hours of lectures and be based on existing lecture courses. There should be no compulsory paper. Where possible, a number of themes for lecture blocks should be considered.
- There should be no practical elements at this time.
- The amount of rewriting of lecture course should, ideally, be kept to a minimum.

**Action: SGR**

#### 10. Proposal for MSc in Computational Science (APS) (DMAC 21/3)

The Committee agreed to support the academic principle of the proposal, but agreed that APS should only take an organisational role in the programme.

#### 11. EEIGM, Nancy, - joint International Master’s (DMAC 21/4)

The Committee decided against participation in a joint International Master’s.

#### 12. Undergraduate Admissions Brochure (DMAC 21/4)

The Committee were asked to send feedback to AOT, and asked AOT to take Chair’s action in proceeding with the final version.

**Action: ALL**

#### 13. Examining and Sabbatical Leave (DMAC 21/5)

The paper was received.

#### 14. Projected Students Numbers for Divisional 5-year Plan (DMAC 21/6)

The Committee noted the concern of the College tutors with the projected UG figures. In order to achieve this increase, the number of high quality applicants to the Department would need to rise significantly, and the number of tutorial fellows would probably need to be raised by 2.

**15. Any Other Business**

- a) APS asked DMAC whether he may resign from the A7 panel of Engineering Science. The panel deals with courses that our students used to take as part of 'Engineering and Society', but no longer do. DMAC gave APS permission to resign from the panel..
- b) The Chair of the EMS SC has requested that EMS students may resubmit industrial visit reports if they are marked unsatisfactory – this is inline with Engineering Science Examination Regulations. After some discussion the Committee were undecided over the proposal as it contradicted the protocol for MS/MEM students, the Chair of DMAC agreed to meet the EMS SC and discuss the matter further. **Action: GT**
- c) The Chair agreed to approve some minor alterations to the EMS and MEM Examination Conventions outside the Committee.

The meeting closed at 4.45 pm.

**The date of the next meeting is Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004, 2 pm, in 21 Banbury Road Committee Room.**