

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, 14 February 2001

AT 2:00 PM IN AG01

PRESENT:

F von Prondzynski (Chairperson)	S Hashmi	K Monks
P Barker	M Henry	A Morrissey
D Beirne	J Hurley	G Murphy
J Bruton	P James	J Murray
A Burke	B Kehoe	C NicPháidín
P Burke	E Kennedy	S Ni Mhaolrúnaigh
M Byrne	C Kenny	W Ó Gormáin
J Carroll	P Kinsella	S Ó hAdhmaill
E Cassidy	M Liddy	R O'Kennedy
M Clynes	C Long	C Petite
T Coulson	L Looney	A Pratt
E Cunningham	M MacConmara	B Richardson
A Daffy	K McKeogh	J Ryan
L Davies	L MacMathúna	R Saunders
U DeVries	C McCorkell	A Sinnott
J Doyle	C McDonagh	M Shine-Thompson
L Doyle	SMcGovern	A Smeaton
M Drumm	B McMullin	M Smyth
M Farren	B McNamara	P Sheehan
R Forster	T Madigan	W Tuke
S Gaffney	A Maillot	J Van Genabith
A Glynn	M Molony	R Verbruggen
		P Willis
		A Wood

APOLOGIES:

D Bancroft	J Kerrane	A Scott
M Brady	B Leavy	M Shields
P MacNeela	S McBride	S Wickham
J Bruton	P McGee	
F Corcoran	S Marlow	
B Flood	E O'Connell	
K Grimes	B O'Dwyer	

1. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted, subject to the inclusion of three additional items under 'any other business'.

2. Minutes of Meeting of Academic Council 13 December 2000

The minutes of the meeting of 13 December 2000 were adopted and signed by the Chairperson, subject to the inclusion of the following amendments:

Item 9 Academic Calendar 2001-2002:- The following additional sentence was inserted: 'It was also agreed that oral examinations in language modules can take place in the study week'.

Item 11 Proposed Structure of Research Advisory Panels:- 2nd paragraph final sentence should read: 'Staff from the Faculty of Science spoke strongly in favour of having one Advisory Panel, for which each School and Centre would be invited to elect a representative'.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of Academic Council

3.1 Future of Irish Language in DCU

The Chairperson reported that the funding issues associated with the development of a revived Irish language policy were currently being debated at Executive and the Resource Review Group. A formula has been agreed for moving ahead with the appointment of an Irish Language Officer.

3.2 Application Process for Students with Disabilities

It was noted that the paper on the new process will be presented to the next meeting of Academic Council.

4. Minutes of Standing Committee of Academic Council

4.1 Minutes of meeting of 7 December 2000

Noted.

4.2 Minutes of meeting of 1 February 2001

Noted.

5. Matters arising from Minutes of Standing Committee

5.1 Graduate Diploma in School Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care Programme (Mater Dei Institute of Education)

The question was raised as to whether Mater Dei staff are part of the Joint Faculty of Education or Humanities. Professor Carroll clarified the issue at the meeting. At present, they are part of neither as the agreement between DCU and Mater Dei allows for the operation of parallel structures within both institutions.

5.2 Draft Guidelines for Assessments and Project Management

Academic Council suggested the inclusion of some amendments to the paper and agreed that Standing Committee should discuss these further, in particular, the issue as to whether and in what circumstances assessment schedules can be changed once they have appeared on the Web. Council also noted that the Guidelines raised a number of resource and policy issues in relation to the storage and archiving of assessments, which need to be examined by Executive.

5.3 Draft Guidelines on Retention and Disposal of Examination Scripts

The Guidelines were adopted by Council subject to the inclusion of the following amendments:

Item 4: - The first sentence should read: ‘Module co-ordinators, whose names are noted on the front of the examination paper, should present themselves, with their ID cards to the Invigilator or Examinations Office to collect the examination papers in accordance with directions issued by the Examinations Office’.

Item 7: -The following additional sentence is to be added at the end of the paragraph: ‘This period may be longer due to local requirements’.

5.4 Draft Guidelines on Minute Writing

The Guidelines were adopted by Council. It was also agreed that the Registrar will prepare a template for minute writing, which will be made available electronically for all staff.

5.5 Students’ Union Proposal for transitional membership of Academic council.

Council approved the proposal to allow elected representatives from the Union Council represent students until the end of September 2001.

5.6 Approval of Increased Flexibility for Intake into GD/MSc in Information Technology

Academic Council ratified the Standing Committee proposal. It was also noted that item 3.2 of the Standing Committee minutes of 1 February 2001 should be amended as follows: the phrase 'Grad Dip/MSc in Computer Applications' to be replaced by 'Grad Dip/MSc in Information Technology'.

5.7 Approval of External Examiners for Taught Programmes and Research Students

Noted and approved.

5.8 Approval of Transfers to PhD Register.

Noted and approved.

6. Accreditation Recommendations

6.1 MA in School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care Programme (Mater Dei Institute of Education)

The recommendation from the Accreditation Panel to approve the addition of a Masters stage to the Graduate Diploma in School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care, subject to minor modification, was approved.

7. Elections to Academic Council Standing Committee

7.1 Procedure for elections to Academic Council Standing Committee

The Registrar spoke to her paper and outlined the procedures that were followed in January for the election of the new Standing Committee. It was agreed that the procedures would be re-examined in the context of the President's review of the decision making processes in the University.

7.2 Proposal to increase seats on the constituency of 'Heads and Professors'.

Council agreed to increase the constituency from 2 to 4.

7.3 Consideration of Gender Proofing

In light of the fact that no women were elected to Standing Committee the meeting was asked to consider whether gender proofing is now necessary in the future election process. Council noted the issue, and agreed that it should be

examined by the new Equality Officer as part of the overall equality policies of the University.

8. Proposal to make the wearing of Academic robes at conferring optional

Patrick Kinsella spoke on the issue, arguing that the prescriptive wearing of robes was both archaic (for staff) and an economic burden (for students). A vigorous discussion ensued. Council voted by 35 to 12 to reject the proposal.

9. School's Liaison Annual Report

Barry Kehoe spoke to the paper. He stressed that Schools Liaison was an advisory rather than a marketing function. The feedback that is coming from the schools suggests that the University needs to look again at the whole question of denominated degrees, and should consider introducing more common entry modes into its suite of undergraduate programmes. Although there are still many positive perceptions about the University in the schools, criticism has also emerged on issues such as the over assessment of students, and the inadequacies of the Personal Tutor system as currently operated. The paper was noted.

10. Report on Open Day 2000

The paper was noted and acknowledgement made of the useful and successful decision to hold DCU's Open Day in conjunction with Open Day in St Patrick's College Drumcondra.

11. Analysis of Students Carrying Failed Modules

Jim Murray tabled and spoke to the paper. He concluded that the data he presented gave no definitive steer as to whether the practice of allowing students to progress while carrying failed modules was good or bad. Nearly 60% of those who were allowed to do so succeeded in passing all their exams, including the failed module from the previous level, and have now progressed to the next level of their programme or have graduated. Nearly 30% did not succeed. It was agreed that the question needs to be examined further in the context of the Dean of Teaching and Learning's review of modularisation.

12. Register of Academic Council Members

Council noted the register.

13. Intra Report 2000

Tony Glynn spoke to the paper . He noted in particular that certain programmes have more problems than others in terms of employer satisfaction with the students, or the non-visiting of students by academic staff.

The Student Union questioned the extent to which the students themselves had been consulted in the preparation of the report. It was agreed that Liam Doyle would talk directly with Tony Glynn on the matter.

The paper was noted by Council.

14. AOB

14.1 Progression and Award Boards: January and February 2001

Louise McDermott reported on the proceedings of the Progression and Award Boards. Council thanked the Assistant Registrar and noted and approved the report, and formally approved the examination results.

14.2 Candidates Recommended for Award of a Higher Degree by Academic Council

Jennifer Butler reported on the proceedings of the Faculty Boards, which Council noted and approved. Her very helpful report was commended. It was also recommended that in future reports it would be useful, for information purposes, to include the name of the supervisor of the candidates. Academic Council formally approved the award of degrees proposed by the Faculty Boards.

14.2 Report of Accreditation Board: B. Eng. in Digital Media Engineering

The Registrar reported that the Accreditation document was very enthusiastically received by the Accreditation Board. The Programme will commence in September 2001 and entry will be in common with the other engineering degrees. Martin Henry expressed some concern with the Board's recommendation that the Programme Team might consider eliminating the criterion of a Science subject as a basic entry requirement. Charles McCorkell replied that this was only being considered and that the proper consultations will take place.

The report was noted and approved by Council.

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 11 April 2001

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____