Department of Government

PGT Student Staff Liaison Committee Meeting

Wednesday 27 April 2016, 14:00 – 15:00 in Room 5B.303

Minutes

Attendees:

Chair: Lawrence Ezrow (Education Officer PGT)

Present: Alex West, Daniel Gobbitt (Graduate Administrators)
Hasna Fadhilah (2nd Year MRES Student)
Eigaude Bertasiute (Faculty Convenor Social Sciences)

1. Apologies for Absence

Anna Bewick (Departmental Administrator)

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Update on previous meeting Action Points

GV907 Political Economy - 2nd Year MRES Student to provide Education Officer PGT with further information on how this module is currently run. Education Officer PGT/Departmental Administrator to look into adding an additional GTA led class to this module for 2016/17. Completed.

GV958 Theory & Explanation in Political Science - Education Officer PGT to discuss content of the course with the lecturers. Completed.

Microwave: PG Common Room – Maintenance of the facilities in this room are not within the department’s remit.

4. Student Engagement

The Graduate Administrator gave a brief update on the process of putting together an events schedule for 2016/17 and invited ideas from students on how to improve student engagement and events as well as feedback from previous events. This can be sent to dgobbitt@essex.ac.uk.
The students raised the prospect of a PGT Barbeque in the summer and suggested holding a prom/social event/BBQ to celebrate the dissertation hand-in in September.

5. **Welcome Week**

The Graduate Administrator introduced the initial plans for Welcome Week 2016/17 and invited feedback and suggestions from students on how to improve WW for future cohorts.

The students suggested a brief introduction to each module as well as a session to explain specific differences between GV900 and GV903. These could be worked into part of the induction/welcome talk for information.

The Graduate Administrator asked whether the online diagnostic test for GV900/GV903 was useful and students responded with very positive feedback. The Graduate Administrator also said they were aiming to hold ‘eNROL Information Sessions’ in WW and could invite representatives of GV900 and GV903 along as stallholders.

6. **Student Surveys**

The Graduate Administrator gave a brief reminder that the Student Satisfaction Surveys and the National Student Surveys are open until Friday 29 April and encouraged student to engage with them.

7. **Student Matters**

The MRES Student representative queried what the role of the External Examiner (EE) was in relation to marking dissertations. The Graduate Administrator assured them that the EE’s were there to scrutinise the marking process and not the academic content of the work.

Students wanted clarification on the aim of the Progress Checks and guidance on what form they should take (i.e. word count, content etc.).

**ACTION:** The Graduate Administrator will supply more detailed guidance on the structure and purpose of Progress Checks, and include this in the Student Handbook for 16/17.

Students asked whether it would be possible to push the Week 30 Progress Check back to Week 32 to prevent crossover with deadlines at the end of March and start of summer term.

**ACTION:** The Graduate Administrators will re-work the timing of the Progress Checks to reduce any busy submission periods.

Students also asked to be notified when they are due to receive feedback. The Graduate Administrators reiterated that the department endeavours to provide feedback within 2 weeks as opposed to the University policy of within 4 weeks.

8. **Any other business**

Students raised that the Dissertation workshop was very useful and effective, but that it could benefit from a clearer structure. Also, the Panels should be better informed to give
formative feedback on Dissertations. The Education Officer PGT suggested that this year Panels would get more involved in the planning of the Dissertation workshop to make it more effective and engaging.

**Date of next meeting: TBC**