STUDENT STAFF LIASION COMMITTEE
Thursday 10 November 2016
(13.00 – 14.00)
MINUTES

Chair Dr Ritta Husted
Present Haji Yakubu, Maurice Abbott, Silvia Lefley, Anyarath Kitwiwattanchai, Satomi Nagashima, Tinger Wei, Vinnosh Jaya Kumur, Chia-Jung Lu.
Secretary Mrs Jayne Summers

STARRING OF AGENDA ITEMS

Noted No additional items were starred. The unstared items on the agenda were deemed to have been received or noted and approved as appropriate.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Approved The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2016

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted There were no matters arising.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION’S REPORT

Noted The Chair welcomed everyone to the first Student Staff Liaison Committee Meeting of the new Academic year and asked all members to introduce themselves.

Reported The Curriculum Review is a review of our courses which has been running for 2 years. This year’s theme is Equality and Diversity. The aim is for all students to achieve their potential and feel fully supported.

Inclusive curriculum

Within this the assessments are varied in the form of assignments and presentations. We also get involved with employability preparing you for when you leave University and start work. Last year we undertook training in Technology in order to use the technology in the classroom to further support students with their learning as well as ensuring greater engagement in class. We have been working with students who have learning challenges ensuring the students get the support needed to help them with their studies. We would welcome students’ feedback on the marking criteria and aim to offer all students an opportunity to engage actively with them in order to understand fully what is required of them in their amendments.
This year we have an intern called Eleanor Conway and she is here to help students and ensure they feel settled and at home and have a good experience of University life.

Internationalising the curriculum

We are focusing on the varied student body we have, and we have reviewed our provision in terms of reading lists, effective use of Moodle and providing opportunities for students to bring their own experiences into the class room. This can be part of their class room discussions as well as assessments.

MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved The SSLC Membership and Terms of Reference 2016-17.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORTS

Essex English Language programme

Reported The Rep explained that the course is going well, and the programme has helped the students to improve their language proficiency. The classes are divided into A2, B1, B2 and C1, but in some of the classes the B2 students work with the C1 students. The rep explained that the B2 students find the level of work difficult to understand because the C1 students are a higher level. The Chair told the rep that she will speak to the Course Director about the students concerns.

Action Chair to speak to EELP Course Director (Dr Ritta Husted)

International Foundation Programme/Year 0

Reported The Rep explained that students who arrived after week 1 had not had a chance to meet up with their Personal Tutor and most of them did not know who their Personal Tutor was. She also told the committee that she thought her Personal Tutor was incorrect because she had e-mailed her but the Tutor replied she was not her Personal Tutor.

A Committee member explained that the since the first meeting in week 1 all students were now being contacted by their Personal tutor to attend a one-to-one meeting. The Reps were also advised to check their myessex page for confirmation of their personal Tutors and Peer Mentors.

Reported The Rep told the Committee that students are finding it hard to get to know each other and whilst there are events arranged by the Social Team some of the students who have attended have told other students that it was not very interesting and told them not to go.

A Committee member explained that we have a variety of events going on in the Department throughout the year. Our Frontrunners do e-mail students asking what them for ideas of events they would like to attend. The Reps were all advised to ask students to respond to the e-mail from the Frontrunners with their suggestions.

Reported The Rep explained that over the past 6 weeks the students were getting on well with their lectures and the curriculum but, in the first 2 week of the term they had a different Academic Skills tutor and that there had
been some uncertainties with their new tutor. The Rep asked if the tutor could be updated with all that had been taught previously.

**Action**

Chair to speak to Academic Skills module Leader (Dr Ritta Husted)

**Graduate Diploma**

**Reported**

The Rep explained that the students find it hard to make friends in the classes of their receiving departments because the students in the department have already made friends. The Rep told the Committee that the Lectures and Personal Tutors are friendly but we struggle with our English in some of our classes.

The Chair suggested that Course Director speak to the receiving departments to establish what social events take place and how this can be communicated to our students so they can get involved.

**Action**

Course Director to speak to departments re Social events (Maurice Abbott)

**Reported**

The Chair asked the Reps how they get the information from the students to bring to the meetings. One of the Reps explained that he is in class with his fellow students and so was able to speak to them directly. This is not so easy for the bigger groups, however. There was further discussion around the setting up of a Facebook confessions page where students could post information anonymously. The Reps agreed to set up the Facebook page and to go into lectures to promote it.

**Action**

Set up Facebook confessions page and promote the page in lectures. (IFP/Year 0 student Reps)

**CURRICULUM REVIEW**

**Reported**

Their will be a review of our provision in terms of module combinations and content. Within the review groups we will be looking at assessment types and feedback and we would like to invite you to sit in on our sub groups and help shape our provision.

**Action**

Chair to send Reps invite to meeting (Dr Ritta Husted)

**SUMMARY SAMT REPORT 2015/2016**

**Received**

The SAMT reported was circulated to the Board during the meeting and will uploaded with the minutes to the web site.

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Jayne Summers  
Senior Administrator  
November 2016
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>New actions</th>
<th>Person responsible</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chair to speak to EELP Course Director</td>
<td>Dr Ritta Husted</td>
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<td>IFP/Year 0 Reps</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Dr Ritta Husted</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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IA119 Computer and Electronics

You said:
"I struggled to understand resistor-capacitor circuits"
We did:
We have provided more worked examples of resistor-capacitor circuits in the module notes.

You said:
"Completing the short exercises/tasks during and after learning the theory in the lectures was helpful"
We did:
We have added some similar style exercises/tasks to more of the lectures.

IA160 Computer Programming

You said:
"I would like more learning resources for computer programming"
We did:
We have added more items to the module reading list, and also linked to these directly from the lecture notes.

You said:
"I struggled to understand the concept of functions in the Python programming language"
We did:
We have allocated more class time to this topic, and provided more examples of the use of functions in Python.

IA111 Major Writer in English Literature

You said:
“We’d like to spend more time learning to analyse the poetry”
We did:
We will have some dedicated sessions in seminar time to tackle this together in a clear and accessible way.

You said:
“We’d like more visuals.”
We did:
All the lectures are accompanied by slides which are placed on Moodle every week; a DVD night is planned too.

You said:
“We’d like a larger variety of prose.”
We did:
More short stories will be posted on Moodle in the Spring term to increase student choice before the exams.

IA108 An Introduction to the History of the United Kingdom during the Twentieth Century

You said:
“The lecture slides were sometimes wordy and difficult to overview”.
We did:
The slides were made less wordy in an attempt to get the information over to the student in an easier to remember manner.

You said:
“Lectures were long (2 hours) and hence there was not that much chance for interaction between students e.g. to discuss information”
We did:
Lectures were reduced to one hour with the 2 hour class being a seminar with plenty of chance for meaningful student discussion and interaction.

IA104 Introduction to Business Management

You said:
“The teacher encouraged us to discover new aspects of the subject for ourselves, using our own research skills”
We did:
We challenge our students to read widely and suggest extra readings, this makes lectures and classes more interactive and create an environment where debates are part of the learning process.

You said:
“the lecturers were approachable and available to provide me with support and guidance”
We did:
we encourage students seek assistance from their lecturers as matters arise in order to solve any problems/queries as soon as possible; we are available during office/tutorial hours and at other times.

You said:
“feedback on my work was useful”
We did:
feedback on formative or summative work is intended to help students with their next assessment. We use both plenary and individual feedback address students’ needs. We indicate what they did well, what needs changing and how to improve for the following assessment.

You said:
“more resources like case studies”
We did:
We will increase the number of case studies for discussion in lectures and classes.
IA106 Introduction to Economics

You said:  
“The classes are very useful and also all the quizzes at the end of every week. Both of them help me to understand what I learn”
We did:  
The weekly quizzes are adjusted to allow students to write a short answer and provide more explanation. Students receive feedback immediately after submitting the quiz through Moodle. A participation mark will be allocated to the completion of the Moodle quizzes so students are rewarded for their engagement.

You said:  
“I like the interactive class exercise named Kahoot. Also, the practice class is very helpful to gain better knowledge of economics”
We did:  
We did a trail on interactive lessons in the Economics module last year and they went very well. Students enjoyed the lessons, they were very active and participation was high. We will use this interactive tool in the economic lessons again; it will particularly benefit the lecture session where we have a large cohort of students this year.

IA118 Politics and Sociology and IA121 Western Philosophy

You said:  
“more homework”
We did:  
Students will again this year be encouraged to undertake additional reading materials based on their needs and interest.

You said:  
“it wasn’t always clear from Moodle which subject was going to be presented the following week”
We did:  
Every week I indicated the subject for the following week and the required reading. The syllabus is easily accessible via the Moodle site.

You said:  
“more books to choose from”
We did:  
I think the required reading is appropriate for students at this level but it is always possible to make additions to the selection.

You said:  
“more Moodle handouts”
We did:  
The photocopied articles will also be uploaded to Moodle for easier reference.
IA109 Law, IA120 Introduction to Legal Theory in Practice and IA176 UK Human Rights

You said:  
“unless it is criminal law it is boring”
We did:  
We now use a criminal law scenario and relate all topics to it.

You said:  
“Could’ve gone more in depth or more stuff”
We did:  
We teach to the abilities of the students – but this year we are introducing a new element – Constitutional Law.

You said:  
“The essay writing has been a bit hard; more attention should be put there”
We did:  
We utilise 2 hours to essay writing and this year we are working closely with the Academic Skills tutor to ensure more help is given.

You said:  
“Break the marks into smaller assignments”
We did:  
We have introduced a ‘participation’ mark

IA140 Academic Skills

You said:  
“Reading articles the represent them. It encourages students to speak and practice English”
We did:  
Continue to use subject specific materials in the classes when appropriate to create greater links to subject areas.

You said:  
“learning how to write in the appropriate format and structure, i.e. reports is helpful”
We did:  
Continue to divide students into subject specific areas in order they can focus on their particular writing style and genre.

You said:  
“Being able to express my ideas and build stronger friendships”
We did:  
Place more emphasis on group / team work and collaborative tasks which are also relevant to employability themes.