**Centre for Journalism**

**Combined Board of Studies/Learning & Teaching Committee/ Graduate Studies Committee**

**Notes of the meeting held on Monday, 24 March 2014**

**at 1pm in G3-03 Gillingham Building**

**PRESENT**

Ian Reeves Director of Learning and Teaching, **Chair**

Prof Tim Luckhurst Head of Centre

Prof Geoff Craig Director of Research

Lesley Phippen Director of Graduate Studies

Richard Pendry Lecturer Broadcast and Online Journalism

Rob Bailey Lecturer Reporting and Writing

Lee Kenny Lecturer Reporting

Jackie Wright Academic Support Assistant, Drill Hall Library

David Evans Academic Support Assistant, Drill Hall Library

Gerardo Calia Multimedia Newsroom Technician

Sarah Megson Central Administration Manager

Laura Garcia-Rodriguez Blancas Graduate Teaching Assistant

Leanne Jackson Student Admin (observer)

Anastasia Bakowski PA to Head of Centre, Centre Administrator, **Acting Secretary**

**STUDENT REPS**

Kieran Watkins Stage 3 Student Representative

Jacqueline Gordon Stage 1 Student Representative

Stine Wannebo Stage 2 Student Representative

Mathilde Guenegan MA International Student Representative

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Kyra Harwood Lucas Student Administration Manager

Kelly Porter Student Admin, Secretary to BOS

Clarissa Place Year 3 student representative

**DID NOT ATTEND**

Ola Ojuko Year 2 student representative

Swati Tata MA Multimedia Journalism student representative

**Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Lee Kenny who had joined the Centre for Journalism in January as Lecturer in Reporting and Leanne Jackson, observer from Medway Student Admin.

**1.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

1.1 The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**2.0 MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 **Absentees on Newsdays**

2.1.1 It was reported that attendance at newsdays had improved considerably. The Chair thanked the student representatives for having fed back the Board’s concerns following the previous BOS.

2.2 **Damage to MAC**

2.2.1 It was noted that the damaged computer had been repaired at considerable cost although no explanation of how the damage was caused had come to light. Students were urged to immediately notify staff of any damage to newsroom equipment. The Head of Centre reminded students of the importance of keeping newsroom doors locked at all times both in terms of security but also with regard to potential insurance claims.

2.3 **Personal Printing**

2.3.1 It was again noted that paper usage in the Centre continued to be very high and students were reminded that no personal printing and photocopying was permitted.

2.4 **Newsday Assessment Criteria**

2.4.1 I Reeves confirmed that he would put the assessment criteria onto the Centre’s website. He directed students to the Student Information area on the website which contained specific information about each programme of study as well as University procedures and regulations.

2.5 **Project Supervisors**

2.5.1 I Reeves indicated that there would be a session for year 2 students to discuss the project element of the degree during term 3. He emphasised the importance of timely preparation for the project submission and the importance of regular meetings with individual Project Supervisors.

**ACTION: Meeting for year 2 students to be scheduled in term 3.**

2.6 **Online Module Questionnaires**

2.6.1 Students were again reminded to complete the online questionnaires when prompted to do so by automatically generated email.

**3.0 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT**

3.1 **UG Programme**

3.1.1 Nothing to report.

3.2 **PG Programmes**

3.2.1 Nothing to report.

3.3 **Implementation Group**

3.3.1 The Head of Centre informed members that an Implementation Group had been set up following the Journalism Review held in November 2013. The remit of the Group was to explore ways to attract more students, heighten the Centre’s presence on the Canterbury Campus and link into other academic programmes. It was noted that the Group had met several times and it was proposed to introduce in 2015/16 a degree in conjunction with the School of English. It was also proposed that L Phippen, G Craig and T Luckhurst would teach Law, Political Reporting and History of Journalism modules respectively in Canterbury and a Kent Extra module would be delivered for the first time in June 2014 at Canterbury. It was also noted that the Centre would have a designated office on the Canterbury Campus. The Head of Centre indicated that the Implementation Group was in the process of writing a plan to be submitted to EG in April.

**ACTION: T Luckhurst to update members on EG’s response to Implementation Group plan.**

**4.0 TEACHING AND LEARNING**

4.1 I Reeves indicated that as part of the session to discuss final year projects in term 3, year 2 students would receive information and guidance about elective modules.

4.2 R Bailey highlighted the poor attendance at shorthand classes and stressed that this subject was a vital part of the degree programme. Students were also reminded that poor attendance had a negative effect on the Centre’s ranking in the NCTJ’s league tables. I Reeves indicated that year 1’s attendance was particularly bad and students were not as far advanced as they should be at this stage despite the high number of teaching hours dedicated to the subject. The Head of School pointed out that a drop in the NCTJ rankings would have a negative effect on the value of the degree as a whole and on future recruitment.

4.3 The year 1 student representative indicated that the early start of the shorthand class was a deterrent and that the combined group on Friday did not work very well as those students working at higher speeds were slowed down by others working at lower speeds. This situation discouraged students from attending as they found the class a waste of time.

**ACTION: Feasibility of combined Friday shorthand group to be reviewed**

4.4 R Bailey urged year 2 students to start compiling their online portfolio and uploading material.

**5.0 ASSESSMENT**

5.1 Nothing to report.

**6.0 RESOURCES, STAFFING AND ACCOMMODATION**

6.1 I Reeves reported that G Calia’s contract had been revised and that he would now be in the Centre one extra day a week.

**7.0 LIBRARY**

7.1 It was noted that £16,000 remained in the library budget for books and journal subscriptions; this needed to be spent within the next three weeks. Journal subscriptions would have to be factored into next year’s budget.

**ACTION: Centre staff to supply J Wright with titles.**

7.2 The year 1 student representative indicated that there were insufficient copies of texts for certain modules which caused difficulties when essay deadlines approached. Students were reminded that there were 15 copies of each core text plus reference copies and with appropriate planning and time management no student should be left without the appropriate material.

7.3 It was noted that from 24 March to 6 June the library would be open 24 hours a day.

7.4 It was noted that the video conference room was being transformed into a bookable video room for students.

7.5 The Head of Centre thanked the library staff for their continued support and advice.

**8.0 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

8.1 **Year 1**

8.1.1 The student representative raised the issue of where students could go on news days when open access to the UG newsroom was prohibited. Students were reminded that the small newsroom was for year 3 and postgraduate students only. Individual lecturers might be agreeable to students occupying a corner of the newsroom on newsdays if this did not interfere with other activities. Students were advised that 24 hour access to all newsrooms would be available from the beginning of the Summer term. G Calia indicated that he would speak to J Wright about the possibility of running video editing software on some PCs in the Drill Hall Library to alleviate this problem.

**ACTION: G Calia to liaise with Drill Hall Library.**

8.2 **Year 2**

8.2.1 The year 2 representative raised the issue of NCTJ fees and indicated that students did not have sufficient prior notice of the number of exams and the cost involved when they started the course. It was also noted that the increase in rent at Liberty Quays and dependence on student loans made it difficult for the majority of students to afford the fees and in some cases prevented students from taking the exams. Students were reminded that NCTJ fees were notified to new entrants before the start of the academic session, were included in the student handbooks and were clearly displayed on the Centre’s noticeboards. The Head of School indicated that the University did not subsidise professional body exams and these could not be included in the UG fee structure. It would, however, be possible to give more detailed information about the structure of the exams and what students would be expected to sit at each stage of the degree.

**ACTION: Dissemination of NCTJ information to be re-examined.**

8.3 **Year 3**

8.3.1 The year 3 representative highlighted the difficulty of having 10 computers in the small newsroom for 27 students, particularly in terms of transferring big files with project work from one workstation to another. Students were reminded that they could not always be guaranteed the same computer and should take their media with them on the hard drive. It was again pointed out to students that the final year project was a time consuming exercise which spanned the whole academic year and thoughtful planning and time management at an early stage was crucial.

8.4 **POSTGRADUATE**

8.4.1 The PG representative had no issues to raise.

**9.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

9.1 The Head of Centre indicated that a competition with a cash prize had been launched. Students would be invited to make a short film describing life as a journalism student in Medway focusing on social and leisure activities, accommodation, why they chose Kent and other issues integral to student life. The film would be used in promotional and recruitment activities.

**ACTION: Ongoing**

9.2 The Head of Centre advised members that the University and the Kent Messenger Group had submitted a bid on 7 January 2014 for a local TV franchise for Maidstone and Tonbridge. Irrespective of the outcome of the bid, it was planned to launch IPTV based at the Medway Campus.

**ACTION: Ongoing**

9.3 L Phippen reported that the Student Liaison Committee continued to meet approximately every three weeks and had managed to resolve several issues without the need to bring them to the Board of Studies.

9.4 L Phippen also raised the issue of seminar room layout and the inappropriateness of holding seminars in rooms which are set up ‘classroom style’. LP asked whether it was possible to have some rooms set up specifically for seminars. S Megson, Central Administration Manager, indicated that specific requests for room layout should be made clear when timetabling requests were submitted.

**10.0 GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD**

10.1 There was no Graduate Studies Board business.

**11.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11.01The next meeting would be held in the Summer term at a date to be confirmed.

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