

Meeting of Class Representatives

9th November 2011

Minutes of Meeting taken by Juliet Voon

Those present:

Tiffany Oliveira – Class Rep for Archaeology 1A

Cassandra Ditzel – Class Rep for Archaeology 1A

Ebba Svantesson – Class Rep for Archaeology 1A

Natalie Grindey – Class Rep for Archaeology 1A

Rachael Fowler – Class Rep for Archaeology 1A

Alexander Westra – Class Rep for Archaeology 2A

Maya Barfield Marks – Class Rep for 3rd Year

Juliet Voon – Class Rep for 3rd Year

Rachel Jones – Class Rep for 4th Year and Undergraduate

Ulf-Dietrich Schoop

Ian Ralston

Robert Leighton

Minutes of Meeting

Aim of this meeting was to give staff and students the opportunity to talk about issues relating to the department

No major points were raised on behalf of the staff

A few minor issues raised were the progress of the new shape of Archaeology 1 and 2.

Wanted to address any issues and glitches that there might be with the new system

Point from Sarah Larios were that most people found it a lot easier and clearer when it was explained

Fieldwork Issue

People were signing up for fieldwork and putting down a non-refundable deposit for more than one project

Some students were then abandoning the project at the last minute

This meant that lots of projects incurred costs that were higher than they should have been

The costs were to cover accommodation and travel. This issue was not realised until staff and students were on site with less people than stated

By students dropping out, projects ran way over budget and did not have enough students to participate in the work

Suggested that it would be reasonable for students to pay the costs incurred if they abandoned a project after signing up. The costs tend to be higher in July and August

Suggestions:

- Formal contract stating that if the student didn't turn up, they would have to pay
- Prefer to be done informally as it is difficult to assess what the costs are with handling various currencies
- For students to pay a deposit and then pay the rest of the money in instalments. This way students who maybe could not afford the initial large sum could pay gradually and for staff, they could monitor the progress of application of students
- If students signed up for one project, they could not sign up for anymore (difficult to keep track of this)
- Deposits only paid once the student has been offered a place
- Restricted to one deposit per project. This way, students can't abandon projects
- General email sent to staff, and for staff to add a list of student names to the list. This way, all staff could see if a student has signed up for more than one project. The problem with this is that there is no way of monitoring if a student applies for a departmental project as well as an outside project

Problem with some of these issues is that it may discourage some students who wish to take part in more than one project (projects which run at different times)

Development of Student Research Rooms (SRR)

Rachel Jones (4th Year Representative) will start cataloguing Archaeology books as of Monday 14th November 2011

Margaret Forest has promised that Archaeology will be given a separate section for Archaeology books

Archsoc are organising a book donation – need to publicize this more

Problem raised with department libraries – lose too much stock out of class libraries as not properly catalogued or staffed properly. Main library took some books, some placed in cardboard boxes and some were sold

It is stressed that the SRR Catalogue is not a substitute for the main library

Department acknowledges that they are doing what they can

Student Issues

First Year

1. Powerpoint – useful to have 24 hours in advance. Should definitely be up on WebCT after class – if not, mention to Sarah Larios. For Honours years, raise this with the course convener

Tutors had mentioned that they would prefer documents to be in powerpoint format as opposed to pdf – issue was that the document couldn't be edited as a pdf. Raised the fact that can't assume everyone has powerpoint. Have to put in pdf format as Adobe Reader is a software that is free for all to use. Also, copyright issues prevent putting images and notes on powerpoint. By using pdf, staff are more safely covered against copyright issues. Decided that it is better and safer to use pdf format for documents and images.

2. Not enough essay guidelines were provided. The only resource was the handbook. Suggested that like other courses (Classics), having 10 minutes of a lecture or a tutorial session dedicated to explaining what was expected of students in writing essays and what not to do. This way, students would also be recommended on readings specific to an essay question and to know what format to use for referencing
3. More clarification was wanted on referencing books and images
4. Inconsistency in markings – these are to be brought to the attention of the course convener and should be dealt with. Main issue was to remain consistent in referencing throughout the essay. Archaeological tradition was to use Harvard system of referencing – perhaps this could be hammered in more in tutorials as previous year students have been penalised for not knowing this

Second Year

1. Tutorials are too short and intense – not enough time to cover practical issues of the tutorial (agreed by both students and tutors). Was it a matter of being too ambitious with material or was it a want to increase the length of tutorial time? Not really possible to increase tutorial to more than 50 minutes. Suggested that students could be told to do preparatory work beforehand so that more could be covered in the lesson. Also, perhaps more material could be given to students (more information than that provided in the handbook)

2. Issue of bringing back practical week – no way of doing this as no time in semester
3. Having a different tutor every week was difficult to handle
4. Some lecturers were starting their lecture before 11.10am and students who were rushing to class missed out on the first 5-10 minutes of the lecture. Ian Ralston had insisted on clocks and lights being put into lecture rooms – hopefully this will get done. Suggested to mention to the lecturer to wait until 11.10am

Third Year

1. Certain classes (Human Origins and Animal & Human Remains) were lecturing for 2 hours solid with no break. Also, there was no group work or discussion like that for other classes. Feedback forms were to be looked at but students from previous years had raised the same issues. This will be addressed by talking to the course conveners. The issue of a break in the Animal & Human Remains course will now be addressed as it was brought to the course convener's attention
2. Requested for information on courses available for Honours Years to be made available to students. Sarah Larios can do this so it will be mentioned and hopefully an email will be sent out. (Especially for current third years wondering about which courses are running next year 2012/2013)
3. A few students expressed interest in doing Archaeological Illustration either next semester or next year. Would be entirely up to course convener and as it stands, this does not seem to be possible so third years will not have the chance to do the course.
4. Within Theoretical Archaeology group, feeding back in front of the whole class what was discussed in small groups was extremely helpful. Suggested for this to be applied for and Ulf Schoop has said that this could be done on an ad-hoc basis

Fourth Year

1. Request to 'kick' postgraduates out of the SRR as they have their own room and the SRR is used mainly by undergraduates.
2. Dissertation handbook has not been put on WebCT yet – perhaps to make this more accessible to fourth years
3. A number of students have requested for a kettle to be made available for fourth years within the department. Decided that Gordon Thomas would need to be contacted regarding this as he is responsible for negotiations with issues in the building. Also

must think about Health & Safety issues. But something is being done to try and sort this.