

**SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY
STAFF/STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE**

**Meeting No. 2/2008
1 pm, Tuesday 27 May 2008
Conference Room, School of Chemistry**

MINUTES

Present: A/Prof. Muthupandian Ashokkumar (*Chair*), Dr. Brendan Abrahams, Dr Colette Boskovic, Christine Callahan (*Minutes*), Melissa Germano (610-101-B. *Opt – 10 am*), Audrey Irish (610-101 – 10 am), Charlie Ma (610-340), Chloe Miller (610-310), Jonathan Tay (610-101-B. *Opt – 2.15 pm*), Ryan Wilson (*Hons*)

1. Apologies

- Meeting commenced at 1.05pm.
- The Chair, A/Prof Ashokkumar, welcomed the staff and students.
- Apologies: Penny Commons, Melina Glasson (610-311), Sarah Harvey (Honours), Connie Tang (610-260), Jing Yu (610-220)

2. Matters Arising from Last Minutes

- Honours: Dateline for Honours Project Outline clashes with Exams.
⇒ Action: Christine to bring this issue up with Vicki Burley.
- 3rd Year: Concerns were raised about next year's study options (Honours or Masters?).
⇒ Action: Information on study options will be amended on the web.
- 2nd Year: Inconsistent marking practice for pracs.
⇒ Action: Academics will be meeting at the end of the year to discuss this further.
- 1st Year: ILTs were thought to be unnecessary as they were even covered in lectures.
⇒ Action: Brendan has discussed this with the Lecturer. It was decided that going through the material twice is beneficial for students and will reinforce the concepts taught.
- The minutes of meeting 1/2008 were agreed as being an accurate record of the proceedings that took place.

3. 3rd Year Dinner

Report:

- The 3rd Year Dinner is usually held at the end of August.

Action:

- Ashok will meet with the 3rd Year students to fix a date.

4. Matters Relating to Honours, Third, Second, and First Year teaching program

Honours Report:

- Students have finished exams and generally felt that they went well.
- 2 issues were raised:
 - The level of difficulty across exams varied significantly.
 - Advanced Structure Elucidation of Biomolecules by Mass Spectrometry & NMR was too condensed. It was suggested that there should be a separate NMR and Mass Spectrometry subject.
- Students would prefer to receive individual grades, preferably numeric grades, instead of 1 letter grade (eg: H1, H2A etc) for all 5 subjects. Colette advised that this is a Science Faculty policy, which the School has to follow.

Action:

- Advanced Structure Elucidation of Biomolecules by Mass Spectrometry & NMR will be reviewed for next years Master's program. Feedback and suggestions will be brought to Prof. Richard O'Hair and Dr. John Gehman's attention.
- Regarding receiving a letter grade for all 5 subjects, this will be reviewed and changed next year.

3rd Year Report:

(340)

- Students are managing all their classes well.
- There have been requests to lengthen the prac sessions.

Action:

- Prac sessions will be changing next year when subject 305 comes into place with the new generation course being introduced.

(315)

- There were inconsistencies in the level of difficulty in experiments. Different students got different set of experiments. Brendan advised that this was due to a lack of resources.
- There were also inconsistencies in marking of pracs.
- The Pracs for the inorganic students clash with Dr Spencer Williams's lectures.

Action:

- The issue of inconsistencies in experiments will be addressed for the new generation course.
- Ashok will speak to Dr Spencer Williams regarding a change of timetable for the inorganic students.

2nd Year Report

- Nil

1st Year Report

(am)

- Pracs are not in order and students are doing their ILTs for the wrong pracs. Brendan said that the prac schedules are mostly placed on the LMS announcements page but not many students look at the announcements. He also added that some prac schedules were disrupted because of the building works this year. He thanked students for their patience and understanding.

(pm)

- There has been good feedback for ILT 4. It was reported that the instructions in the tute book were clear and easy to follow.
- Students are requesting for more group work at tutes as well as the use of more models and demos to assist in their learning.
- Students find pracs straightforward but would rather them be structured to be more relevant to the course. Brendan advised that pracs and lectures are not designed marry each other. Pracs are put in place for students to learn certain lab skills such as filtration, extraction etc.
- Students are very happy with Dr Brendan Abrahams's lectures. They have found his lectures very helpful as he would relate his material to the real world and use models and demos extensively. He also went through specific examples which students have found very useful.
- Students have found it difficult in managing time at pracs. Brendan advised that students will improve and become faster in their experiments once they familiarise themselves with the lab and learn more skills.
- It makes a big difference when students get a good demonstrator who goes through the prac and explains everything well.

Action:

- The School will implement training kits next year for all demonstrators to bring them up to speed.

5. Any Other Business

- The Head of School (Prof Ken Ghigginio) suggested an Industry visit for 3rd Year students. 3rd Year student representatives at the meeting expressed interest to this recommendation. Ashok suggested the Industry visit in the afternoon, followed by the 3rd Year dinner in the evening.

- Suggested organisation: Qenos plastic industry in Altona.
- 3rd Year students have expressed interest on attending some research seminars.

Action:

- Ashok will look further into organising the Industry visit for 3rd Year Students.
- Ashok will look into advertising lecture seminar series to 3rd Year students (maybe through LMS).

Meeting ended at 1.45 pm.