



GRADUATE STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday 3 March 2016, 2.00 pm, Bragg Committee Room

Present: Professor Haniff (Chair), Giovanna Cottin-Buracchio (HEP), Hippolyte Astier (SP), Nandan Gokhale (CSC), Tejas Guruswamy (QS), James Hamp (TCM), Siri Luthman (BSS), Peter Newton (TFM), Peter Townsend (SMF), Yago del Valle-Inclan (NP), Konrad Viebahn (AMOP), Leah Weiss (OE), Ms Dann (Graduate Office), Ms Khan (Secretary)

In attendance: Susan Gatell (Careers Advisor, Cambridge University Careers Service), Dr Sonja Tomaskovic (Researcher Developer)

Apologies: Adrien Amiguez (QM), Ankita Anirban (SP), Carmen Palacios Berraquero (NanoDTC), Christopher Ashcroft (SD), Kamrad Javid (AP), Bono Xu, Dr Gripaios, Professor Parker (HoD), Mrs Weale

1. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January were confirmed.

2. Matters arising

- i) Cavendish III – the chair reported that GSCC student member feedback on communal/social facilities had been sent to Richard Philips as part of the consultation on the Cavendish III building design. It was noted that the graduate student community would be invited to a formal presentation in order to provide feedback to the Cavendish III staff logistics group on the conceptual design of the new building.

ACTION: Secretary to send members details of the dates and times of the Cavendish III consultation event schedule.

- ii) Alumni Industry Day – members were informed that Tejas Guruswamy had volunteered to plan and coordinate the event and would need suggestions as to which Alumni to invite. Two dates in early June had been bookmarked and the final date would be decided once the lecture room and display space had been booked.

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ACTION: Student members to send types of careers and/or career paths of interest to Chair.

ACTION: Chair to ask academic staff to provide contact details of Alumni who have followed interesting career paths.

3. Chairman's business

- i) Researcher development – the chair reported that the Department had been awarded funding for the researcher development portfolio from the School, and that five of the seven activities proposed in the bid had been approved.
- ii) Information for current graduate students – the secretary confirmed that the webpages were still under development due to staff commitment during the busiest admissions period of the academic year.
- iii) Researchfish entries – members were reminded that PIs and students who were funded by the Research Councils were required to activate their accounts on the Researchfish website, and submit their research outcomes by 4pm on the 10th March. Non-compliance with the collection period could lead to sanctions being imposed on the University, in terms of funding allocations. It was noted that so far 21% had submitted and that a reminder would be issued to PIs and students to complete and submit their outcomes.

4. Careers and Researcher Development

Susan Gatell (Careers Advisor) and Dr Sonja Tomaskovic (Researcher Developer) had been invited to the meeting to update members on services they offer to graduate students and to collect feedback on the requirements of graduate students in the Department. The significant matters discussed were that:

- i) the Cambridge University Careers Service provided high quality job listings; hosted careers fairs; provided workshop / skills sessions and 1-1 appointments; hosted the Gradlinks facility; and presented at departmental induction events;
- ii) more information could be provided to on graduate destination data, that would allow the Department to be benchmarked against other departments;
- iii) the Careers Service provided job listings relevant to posts based in Europe and not just the UK;
- iv) the Careers Service was planning to host 1-1 appointments at the Cavendish site;
- v) career planning should start as early as the first year of PhD study and that networking was equally as important;
- vi) it was beneficial for students to have developed a general careers skill-set that catered for both academic and professional careers, in order to keep options open;
- vii) the Researcher Development Programme (RDP) and website were being re-developed, and included an online skills analysis module that could be followed up with a 1-1 appointment;
- viii) the RDP was aiming to offer a programme suite of 1 day training courses and smaller sessions to accommodate time constraints;
- ix) taster training slides or more detailed training agendas would help students determine if courses were suitable to their requirements;
- x) students would prefer to have more physics-specific events, held locally on site, during lunchtime slots;

- xi) it was problematic to split all courses into subject specific events due to numbers and logistics;
- xii) the information from mailing lists can be overwhelming for students, making it difficult for students to link career planning to researcher development without the help of their supervisor;
- xiii) students needed decision making tools to help decide which career and development path to take, and that tailored signposting could take place in 1-1 appointments;
- xiv) students needed events to be comprised of informal intimate settings, where they were not intimidated or overshadowed by post-docs or staff.

ACTION: Chair and secretary to develop a vision/strategy for researcher development, along the lines of a formalised tailored programme for the Department of Physics.

5. Graduate Student Matters

No items were received.

6. Any other business

- i) EU referendum – members discussed the consequences of the Leave versus Remain campaigns on UK research and grant income. Student members were advised to contact union societies if they were interested in campaigning.

7. Date of the next meeting

12th May 2016