

**Physics & Astronomy Student Staff Council Meeting
Thursday 30 March 2023, 1 pm , Staff Common Room**

Present: Cameron Rae, Phil King, Sebastian Schulz, Andrew Cameron, Ian Bonnell, Anna Conti, Lukas Rossmanith, Joseph Brennan, Oscar Cray, Yiu Fung Chiu, Nikko Juengsophonvitavas. Rory Brown, Lilla Barta, Loic de Saint Do, Vasileios Kalaitzidis, Chris Hooley, Liam King, Chico Paulics, Lucy Kappai, Katie Myles, Lachlan Dufort Kennett, Carol Ballinger, Emily Frank, Tomas Almeida, Ben Houston, Murry Purkis, Sham Ahmed, Moira Jardine, Janet Lovett, Lucy Hadfield

1. Welcome

The School President welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Graham Turnbull, Paul Cruickshank, Maria Samuel, Helen Cammack, Vicki Cormi, and Bhani Kaur sent apologies

3. Review of external examiner reports

External examiner reports from last year had been made available to SSC members prior to the meeting, and there were no comments raised for discussion.

4. Year Group reports

1st year reps report

The mid semester survey feedback was positive and students are happy. An issue with the notes for quantum phenomena was raised with the lecturer and has been resolved. Students would like the lasers labs to be scheduled at the same time as lasers lectures. The lab coordinator explained that the labs are timetabled to spread out the assessment deadlines, but coordinating with lectures can be looked into.

The Gateway student rep was not present at the meeting but will contact the Gateway coordinator.

2nd year reps report

Physics – there was a low response to the mid semester survey, but the feedback received was mostly positive, and the reps have met with the module coordinator to discuss. Some students would like workshop questions to be more interactive.

Astro – students are happy, although finding lectures quite fast paced. Students would like more questions to prepare for exams, and have requested typed lecture notes. The module coordinator encouraged students to use the textbooks available along with the lecture slides.

3rd year reps report

Students taking PH4038 are finding it hard but rewarding. and think the teaching is excellent. There are some issues with PH3007 and the recent class test average was low. Students find the lectures do not have a natural flow, and some students feel reluctant to ask questions. The class rep has discussed with the DoT, and additional support sessions have been arranged. PH3014 students enjoyed the Burn conference but are finding the workload more demanding than expected for 15 credits. In AS3013 students have not received feedback from submitted work and the deadline for the next exercise is approaching. Students who have not taken AS2001 would appreciate more resources to

cover material in this module. There were no concerns raised for PH3101 labs. PH3012 is going well, although students are finding handwriting on the board hard to read and unstructured. Lectures are located in the Irvine building and students often arrive late.

4th year reps report

There was a low response to the mid semester survey, but more detailed feedback is hoped for in the MEQs. Students are working hard on their projects.

5th year reps report

There was a good response to the mid semester survey with mostly positive feedback. Any issues have already been addressed by module coordinators. The social event for MPhys students organised last week was well attended, and the project poster session was a great success.

Joint Honours rep report

There are no issues to report for joint honours students. The rep is organising an informal gathering for sub honours students to meet with honours students on joint degrees to get a student perspective.

Taught postgraduate report

The Astro MSc students have no issues to report; they have a heavy workload this semester with projects but are finding it manageable.

5. EDI report

The Vice Principal (People and Diversity), Rebekah Widdowfield, visited the School last week and had positive meetings with staff and some students. St Andrews Pride is on Saturday and everyone is encourage to go along.

6. School role reports

There was no business to report.

7. Society reports

PhySoc

The women in STEM lunch with Prof Moira Jardine was well attended; the recent bake sale for earthquake relief raised £700; the Cern visit was a success; most of the roles were filled at the AGM; Starball tickets are available; and a pub quiz with AstroSoc and EASy is planned.

AstroSoc

Recent events include talks, dog walking, game nights, and crafting events.

EASy

The model mission control event struggled with low numbers, and future events will try to focus on talks and workshops that would interest more people. The rocket competition project is ongoing and hopefully a rocket will be built and launched in the next couple of months.

8. AOCB

The low response rate in the mid semester surveys was discussed, and it was noted that in person, on paper is the best format for a good number of responses, and setting aside some time at the start of a lecture is a good way to encourage students to complete the form.

The HoS asked for feedback on library access in the afternoons. The doors should now be open at all times, and there should be signage to indicate when labs are taking place in the library. It is hoped that library access will be extended in the evening.

The HoS thanked the School President for chairing the meeting and for all the good work done since taking on the role.