PRESENT: Katie Allan (Secretary), Derek Ball, Sarah Broadie, Jessica Brown, Alexanne Dieu (Student Rep, 2000 level), Alex Douglas, James Harris, Katherine Hawley, Lisa Jones, Kim Kopec (Student Rep, MLitt), Ethan Landes, (Student Rep PhD), Patrick Greenough, Marianna Panteli (Student Rep, 1000 level), Walter Pedriali, Simon Prosser, Theron Pummer, Sophie Rommel (Student Rep, 2000 level), Ben Sachs, Barbara Sattler, Fenner Tanswell, Mark Thakkar, Antonia Zimmermann (Philosophy School President & Convenor).

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Apologies for Absence
   Liz Ashford, Josh Bernard-Cooper (Student Rep, 1000 level), Rhona Frood (Student Rep, Evening Degree), Berys Gaut.

2. Minutes of the Philosophy Staff/Student Liaison Committee meeting held on 11 October 2017

   The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2017 were approved and adopted.

3. Matters arising from the above minutes

   There were no matters arising.

STAFF BUSINESS

4. How the Department Uses Student Feedback

   The Director of Teaching reported on how the department uses feedback from students to inform developments in teaching and assessment. In particular the department has recently been giving consideration to how best to close the feedback loop with students and keep students appraised of the actions that the department has taken in response to student feedback. The committee reviewed the webpage for the SSCC and noted that this is where minutes from the meeting are made publicly available.

   The Director of Teaching presented a short ‘prezi’ presentation on student feedback and how the department responds to it and sought the views of SSCC as to whether this is a helpful tool and something which can be added to the SSCC webpage. The committee agreed that this was extremely helpful and the prezi will be posted onto the SSCC webpage, highlighted as a news item on the main philosophy page and student reps agreed to post the prezi onto student Facebook groups for philosophy.
The Director of Teaching noted that the 5-yearly teaching review will be taking place on 21 November and sought the assistance of student reps in inviting students at all levels to contribute to the student sessions.

5. National Student Survey (NSS) Results

The Director of Teaching reported on the excellent outcome from NSS2017 which ranked the department as top in the UK for student satisfaction with a 100% student satisfaction rate for the second year running. She went on to note that the department is not complacent about the results as the survey does show that there are some areas where improvements can be made: namely, around good advice on study choices. It was noted that it is very difficult for the department to respond to, and improve on, the issues highlighted by weaker scores, without knowing how students are interpreting these particular questions. The Director of Teaching and School President agreed that a meeting with current honours students will be arranged to take place after the teaching review to discuss with students their understanding and interpretation of the NSS questions.

STUDENT BUSINESS: PhD REPORT

6. The Student Rep for the PhD programme circulated the results of a survey (on file) that he had recently asked PhD students in the department to complete. The survey consisted of 30 questions and had 28 respondents. In general, the survey showed a high level of satisfaction around issues to do with departmental culture and environment and supervision but lower satisfaction on questions about quality of life and this was thought to be connected to students’ financial concerns around tutor pay, research budgets and printing costs.

The most significant issue of concern to PhD students at the moment is the loss of the PG Hut which is due to be demolished in June 2018 as part of the MUSA extension. There are, as yet, no clear plans for how the loss of study space will be addressed in the short term. The PhD students are especially concerned about the lack of communication on this issue. The Head of Department confirmed that the department is equally concerned about the matter which had only in recent months come to light and is seeking a solution to the accommodation problem in consultation with the Principal’s Office.

PhD students remain concerned about university policies on postgraduate tutoring, specifically the payment arrangements, and the sudden introduction this year of tutoring by academic staff which has the potential to reduce tutoring opportunities for PhD students. The Head of Department responded that the issues about payment for tutoring are university issues that cannot be resolved at a departmental-level but he emphasised that the department had taken concerns up with the Proctor and that as a consequence the payment arrangements have been improved slightly for this year. He added that this was only possible because of the tutoring now being undertaken by academic staff and noted that budgetary pressure is unlikely to alleviate in the future.

Finally, the Director of Graduate Studies and Deputy Director of Graduate Studies confirmed that they would arrange to meet with the PhD Student Rep in the next week to review the results of the student survey in more details.

STUDENT BUSINESS: MLITT REPORT

7. The Student Rep for the MLitt programmes reported that students provided positive feedback on the core module PY5101 Current Issues I. A number of students had reported early in the semester that they felt the slides for the Epistemology section contained too many details, that
the pace in lectures was too slow and that the teaching was too focussed on lecturing and provided limited opportunity for discussion. The Director of the MLitt Programmes noted that this feedback had been discussed in detail with the lecturer and the students conceded that the classes had improved as a result. It was also noted that students should bear in mind that there are students on the programme from a wide range of academic backgrounds and with different exposure to Epistemology and this must be addressed through the lecturing.

The other core module is PY5103 Research Methods which is organised around three themed streams and run as book seminars focusing on one key text and this module received very positive feedback.

The Student Rep also reported that some students had concerns about the assessments on option modules and felt that they did not know what was expected of them. The students have read the guidance available in the Student Handbook and in the individual module guides but remain unclear and anxious about what to expect. The Director of the MLitt programmes will raise this with module co-ordinators and request that they discuss this specifically in the next classes and highlight the relevant information in individual module guides.

STUDENT BUSINESS: HONOURS REPORT

8.1 PY3100 Reading Philosophy 1

The Student Rep reported that feedback on this core module was very positive and student reported enjoying the broad range of topics covered. Some students reported that they would like more guidelines about the assessed presentation element which is worth 30% of the final module grade and some students felt it would be more useful to be allocated into pairs for the presentations before the start of teaching. The Director of Teaching noted the practical reasons why it was not possible to pair students before the first week of teaching which are essentially that student numbers remain fluid throughout the first week of teaching due to the re-advising period. It was agreed that the module co-ordinator will review the written guidelines to students on the presentations but the module co-ordinator also sought to reassure student concerns by reporting that assessment of the earliest presentations in the semester takes into account that it is perhaps harder for the first pair.

8.2 PY4606 Contemporary Epistemology

The Student Rep reported overwhelming positive feedback from students on this module. Students reported enjoying the structure of lectures, highlighted the encouraging lecture style and the availability of the module co-ordinator in terms of meeting students outside of class hours. Of particular note was the use of podcast material on the reading list for the module which is very popular with students.

8.3 PY4608 Political Philosophy in the Age of Revolutions

The Student Rep reported positive feedback on this module and students particularly noted their appreciation of the knowledge and expertise of the module co-ordinator as well as his teaching style. Some students suggested that they would appreciate more guidance on essay writing and a few commented on the timetable for the module and noted that they might have preferred more time between the lecture and the seminars. The module co-ordinator reported that he had provided more detailed guidance on essay writing in the lecture last week which will hopefully have addressed concerns and that students have been provided with sample essays and some ideas for essay topics.
8.4 PY4625 Philosophy & Public Affairs: Global Justice

The Student Rep reported that this module was very well-received by students. The students enjoyed the contemporary relevance of the issues covered on the module, as well as the interdisciplinary approach taken.

8.5 PY4635 Contemporary Moral Theory

The Student Rep reported that this module has received very positive feedback from students who report that they have appreciated the open and encouraging environment created for seminar discussion. Some students reported that they would benefit from more guidance about expectations for the blog posts and also that they would like to have more time spent on the harder readings in lectures. The module co-ordinator noted that he was aware of these concerns raised at the start of the module and that he has made changes in response. This module is taught by a 1 hour lecture and a 2 hour tutorial and most students reported that they would like more lecture time and less time in tutorial discussion.

8.6 PY4638 Philosophy of Religion

The Student Rep reported that this module has received very positive student feedback although it was reported that some students were concerned that the module is assessed by 3 essays with the final 2 essays due to be submitted on the same day. It was noted that students will receive feedback on essay 1 well before they have to submit the next pieces. The rationale for the assessment pattern is that the module has 3 essays tasks which relate to the 3 distinct parts of the syllabus but it is difficult to separate essays across the teaching period, without there being too short a time between each or a too-early deadline in the first few weeks. The module co-ordinator indicated that they will review the assessment before the next delivery of the module.

8.7 PY4640 Mediaeval Philosophy

The Student Rep reported that students on the module were enjoying the opportunity to study this historical period of philosophy and the module co-ordinator was praised for his engaging lecturing style and his helpful guidance through difficult texts. It was reported that some students would appreciate more of an historical context for the more complex texts and the module co-ordinator noted that this is provided via the secondary readings which he highlights to students at the end of each lecture.

8.8 PY4649 Core Works in Continental Philosophy

The Student Rep reported that this module was popular with students who are enjoying the engaging and enthusiastic lecturing style of the module co-ordinator. Some students had reported that they would like to have seen the module focus on core works by different philosophers, but the module co-ordinator explained that the idea behind the module was to focus on one core text each time the module runs, and engage in close readings of it and related texts. This was made clear in the description of the module provided during pre-advising.

8.9 PY4701 Philosophy and Pedagogy

The Student Rep reported that there was no specific feedback had been received about this module.
STUDENT BUSINESS: SECOND YEAR REPORT

9.1 PY2010 Intermediate Logic

The Student Rep reported that this module received positive student feedback and students particularly enjoyed the use of practical examples, class handouts, small class sizes and the engaging teaching style. Some students reported that the lack of use of slides in lectures has caused confusion and others reported that they would like to receive individual feedback on the weekly exercises. The Student Rep noted that some students are planning to hold a student-led review session to support other students on the module. The module co-ordinator reported that he has deliberately moved away from the use of slides in lectures to allow the focus to be more clearly on the active practice of working through proofs and that this approach seems to be working well with lectures and tutorials this year having a better level of student attendance. The Director of Teaching added that it was not possible to provide written feedback on the weekly exercises and that students should be aware that reviewing the weekly exercises in tutorials does constitute a form of feedback.

9.2 PY2011 Foundations of Western Philosophy

The Student Rep reported that this module has received positive student feedback. Students have enjoyed the teaching on the module and found the readings thought provoking. Some students reported that they would like to see lecture slides uploaded to Moodle before lectures but the module co-ordinator responded that this was a deliberate decision which is intended to encourage attendance at lectures and because the lectures allow for Q&A which has an important role to play in the development of independent thinking. Students also reported that they would have liked the essay questions for the module to be available earlier and the module co-ordinator indicated that they will circulate this information earlier in the future. Some students also noted that they felt that the large size of tutorial groups impeded discussion and the Director of Teaching confirmed that the group sizes had increased slightly this year due to pressures on the casual salary budget used to pay for postgraduate tutors.

STUDENT BUSINESS: FIRST YEAR REPORT

10.1 PY1010 Mind and World

The Student Rep reported that this module has received very positive student feedback and students have found the topics covered interesting and stimulating. The main issue reported by students was the large number of questions asked during lectures which slows down the pace of the lecture and which can be confusing to follow. The students requested that either the lecture slides should be posted on Moodle before the lectures or that the lecture is recorded. The module co-ordinator responded by first noting that lecture slides are always posted on-line before the lecture or that the lecture is recorded. The module co-ordinator responded by first noting that lecture slides are always posted on-line before the lecture. He went on to note that the students on the module are very enthusiastic and have been wanting to engage with the material and ask many questions during the lectures and perhaps he should manage this more in future, although it is a find balance as engagement is an important part of the learning process.

10.2 PY1011 Moral and Political Controversies

The Student Rep reported that this module has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from students. Student are particularly enjoying the lecture style and the practical approach to philosophy. Some students have reported that they are finding some of the readings quite challenging and the module co-ordinator responded that this is to be expected as the reading
lists includes a wide range of texts and some are intentionally challenging. The discussion in tutorials is intended to aid understanding of the more challenging material covered.

STUDENT BUSINESS: EVENING DEGREE REPORT

11. The Student Rep reported that there was no specific feedback had been received about this the evening degree.

MATTERS FOR NOTING

12. Any Other Competent Business

12.1 Use of Panopto
The School President noted that feedback from students who were on modules involved in piloting the use of Panopto lecture capture was very positive and the resource was popular with students. Student especially found the resource useful as a revision tool. The Director of Teaching added that feedback from the Student Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) showed that Panopto had been popular and noted that the system is being used again this year on PY1011 as a second pilot. However, she went on to note that the department needed to continue to monitor the impact of the use of Panopto on student attendance at lectures because this did appear to be adversely affected during the pilot scheme las year.

13. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 21st February 2018 at 2pm

Katie M Allan
School Administrator
22 November 2017
**UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS**  
**SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL & FILM STUDIES**  
**PHILOSOPHY STAFF/STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF 11 OCTOBER 2017**

### ACTION LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Student Feedback</td>
<td>Prezi to be posted on SSCC webpage</td>
<td>Director of Teaching/ School IT Officer</td>
<td>w/c 16 October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prezi to be posted as news item on PY webpage</td>
<td>Director of Teaching/ School IT Officer</td>
<td>w/c 16 October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prezi to be posted onto Facebook groups</td>
<td>School President/ Student Reps</td>
<td>w/c 16 October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student participants for teaching review to be arranged</td>
<td>Director of Teaching/ School President/ School Reps</td>
<td>Before 21 November 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. National Student Survey (NSS) Results</td>
<td>Meeting with current honours students to discuss NSS questions to be arranged</td>
<td>Director of Teaching/ School President</td>
<td>w/c 29 January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. PhD Report</td>
<td>Meeting to be arranged to discuss PhD student survey Results</td>
<td>Director if Graduate Studies/ PhD Student Rep</td>
<td>w/c 16 October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. MLitt Report</td>
<td>More information to be provided immediately to MLitt students about assessment on option modules</td>
<td>Director of MLitt/ Module Co-ordinators</td>
<td>w/c 16 October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 PY3100 Reading Philosophy 1</td>
<td>To review written guidelines on presentations</td>
<td>Module Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Before 2018/19 delivery of module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6 PY4638 Philosophy of Religion</td>
<td>To review assessment pattern of module</td>
<td>Module Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Before next delivery of this option module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2 PY2011 Foundations of Western Philosophy</td>
<td>Essay questions to be circulated earlier in the module</td>
<td>Module Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Before 2018/19 delivery of module</td>
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22 November 2017