

Annual Report of the Teaching Committee

May, 2008

1. The Teaching Committee is required by its terms of reference to provide an annual report to the Faculty Board in the Easter Term.
2. The members of the Teaching Committee are currently

Prof Thanasis Fokas	Dr Fernando Quevedo
Prof Imre Leader (Chair of Curriculum Committee)	Dr John Lister
Dr Tom Fisher (on leave Easter term)	Dr Stephen Siklos (Chair)
Dr Keith Carne	Dr P Friz (Prof Richard Weber in Lent)
Mr Richard Lau (Junior Member, Downing, Part IB)	
Mr T Sutherland (Junior Member, Emmanuel, Part III)	

Junior members are nominated by the Chair of the Committee and appointed by the Faculty Board. Recent practice has been to seek expressions of interest by means of an e-mail to all Part IB students before the beginning of the academical year, and to invite the Junior Member at the end of his or her first year of service to serve for an additional year, so that there is a Part IB representative and a Part II representative (or possibly a Part III representative and a Part IB or II representative).

3. We met a total of 5 times in the academic year 2007/08, four times in the Michaelmas term and once in the Easter term. As usual, the major item on the agenda was a review of the undergraduate Tripos examinations.
4. We provided a detailed report on the undergraduate examinations to the Faculty Board based on reports of the Examiners and the External Examiners, on examination data such as statistics and the actual questions, and on the information from the e-mail questionnaires. Our report was used as the basis of the Faculty Board's response to the Education Committee of the General Board. This report was considered by the Board at its November meeting.
5. We provided a proposal, as requested by the Faculty Board, for quantitative classification criteria, which is to be discussed at the Faculty Board meeting on 22nd May.
6. Normally, we provide a report to the Faculty Board on undergraduate teaching, based on the e-mail questionnaire in conjunction with the data provided by the Faculty Office from the paper questionnaires. From this information (together with examination data and statistics), we are able form judgements on the overall undergraduate programme. A small number of courses/lecturers are referred to the Heads of Department for possible action. We were unable to provide the report this year; the chairman simply found himself too busy. In future, he will be less dilatory.

The analysis of questionnaires was sent to the Heads of Department, but this year we did not provide any recommendations. Next year, our intention is to send each lecturer the response to the on-line questionnaire relating to their course as soon as it is available in June, so that it can provide more timely feedback.

7. In addition, the Teaching Committee was involved in various miscellaneous activities (for some of which the Board has received an independent report), including:
 - Induction session for first year students;
 - Examination briefing session for Part IA students;
 - E-mail to Part IA students explaining the rubric for the examination;
 - Advising on the choice of lecturers;
 - Advising on the timetable for lectures;
 - Supervisor training sessions (though this has now been largely taken over by the Staff Development Office).