

Staff-Student Consultative Committee
Minutes for Meeting No. 2 of 2018/2019

Date: 2th May, 2019

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Venue: Rm 518A, CYM Physics Building, HKU

Present:

Dr. J. J. L. Lim (Chairman, Staff representative)

Dr. J.C.S. Pun (Staff representative)

Dr. Y. J. Tu (Staff representative)

Dr. M. K. Yip (Staff representative)

Prof. H. F. Chau (In attendance)

Miss Chan Ying Wai (1st year representative)

Mr. Yeung Ryan Wai-Yen (2nd year representative)

Mr. Wong Hong Tsun Thomas (3rd year representative)

Mr. Gong Zhengyangguang (4th year representative)

Mr. Chan Ho Cheung (Postgraduate student representative)

Miss Chan Hei Yung (Physics society)

(1) Feedback from 1st year student representative

Concern: Students taking PHYS2055 (Introduction to Relativity) reported that there was only one time slot scheduled for each tutorial class. They asked for more time slots.

Action: The instructor (KM Lee) has been notified and has been asked review the tutorial schedule.

Concern: Students taking PHYS2250 (Introductory Mechanics) reported that there were two time slots scheduled for each tutorial class, but both time slots were arranged in the same day. They asked if the time slots can be scheduled in different days.

Action: The instructor (KM Lee) has been made aware and will review the tutoring schedule.

(2) Feedback from 2nd year student representative

Concern: Students expected that laboratory works could be scheduled during the reading week in March because as was proposed in the last SSCC meeting. However, none were scheduled during the reading week in March.

Action: The laboratory coordinator (J Lee) has been reminded to consider whether lab sessions can be scheduled during the reading week, and to provide feedback to the SSCC if not possible.

Concern: Students asked if the lab reports can be submitted on-line.

Action: The laboratory coordinator (J Lee) has been asked to consider whether this can be made possible.

Concern: Students reported that the venues of two consecutive lectures: PHYS3851 and PHYS4351 were so far from each other, i.e. main building and CYMP building respectively. The travelling time between two places was very tight.

Action: Teachers should take notice when students systematically arrive late for lectures, to find out why, and to make allowances whenever possible.

Concern: Students reported that the lecture time of PHYS3350 (Statistical Mechanics and Thermodynamics) was poorly scheduled. The lectures ended at 6:30pm. They also praised Dr. Zhang's teaching.

Action: Class scheduling is under the control of the University, not the department.

(3) Feedback from 3rd year student representative

Concern: Students taking PHYS2055 (Introduction to Relativity) reported that the midterm was scheduled so late (on early April) that the graded answer scripts cannot reach them before the end of semester.

Action: The instructor (KM Lee) has been notified and asked to address this issue.

Concern: Students taking PHYS3150 (Theoretical Physics) reported that the classes always started 10 minutes after the official time (i.e. 9:40am instead of 9:30am) and then ended 10 minutes after the official schedule. Therefore, many students had difficulty to attend the next class on time. Students also reported that the due date of HW assignment was not stated in the webpage. They appreciated the performance of the tutor.

Action: The instructor (ZD Wang) has been notified and reminded to follow scheduled timeslots unless agreed upon otherwise with all students.

Concern: Students taking PHYS4351 (Advanced Quantum Mechanics) reported that the tutor recited every word from the teaching material and thus his teaching was not effective.

Action: The instructor (W Yao) has been notified and requested to bring this issue to the attention of the tutor for this course.

Concern: Students taking PHYS4650 (Stellar Physics) reported that the course was well designed to provide promptly feedback. However, the lecture on Python was very short and did not cover sufficient material to allow for the necessary coding needed for the course, although the tutor was very helpful.

Action: The instructor (S. Ng) has been notified and asked to address this issue for the next academic year.

(4) Feedback from 4th year student representative

Concern: Students taking PHYS4551 (Solid State Physics) reported that the transparencies for the overhead projector course were aged. Some words and equations were too blurred to read.

Action: The instructor (MH Xie) has been notified and asked to address this issue for the next academic year.

Concern: Students taking PHYS7351 (Graduate Quantum Mechanics) reported that the teaching pace was very fast to follow, e.g., relativistic quantum mechanics. On the other hand, the teacher spent quite some time on topological insulator, which was excluded from the exam.

Action: The instructor (SQ Shen) has been notified and asked to address these issues for the next academic year. Teachers are reminded to seek regular feedback from students to mitigate problems with teaching pace.

Concern: Students taking PHYS4654 (General Relativity) commented that the style of the teacher was simply to read from the notes and write them on the whiteboard – not an effective teaching or learning method. They also suggested using Hobson's textbook instead of that by Wald.

Action: The instructor (M Su) has been notified and asked to address this issue for the next academic year.

Concern: Students suggested if the department can organize a course selection talk for those who are studying a minor in physics.

Action: The Chair of the Curriculum Committee (HF Chau) has been made aware of this request.

(5) Feedback from postgraduate representative

Concern: Postgraduate representative reported that all HKU staffs and students have to show their university cards when they purchase food in HKU canteens.

Deliberation: This new policy causes problems to visiting guests.

Action: Teachers have been made aware of this potential problem, and to accompany their guests when necessary.

Concern: Postgraduate students reported that there was a lab tutor who did not show up and perform his duties for more than one time. They suggested that the department should have a measure to handle this issue.

Action: This issue has been brought to the attention of the department at the Staff meeting. Tutors who do not carry out their responsibilities will be subject to penalties such as verbal warnings and warning letters. Deduction of studentship is also possible for extreme cases.

Concern: Many undergraduates did not know who was the responsible person (i.e. the tutors, technician, or the teacher) to reassign the lab time slots when they had timetable clash. Sometime they had to wait for weeks for a reply.

Action: The laboratory coordinator (J Lee) has notified, and to explain the appropriate procedure to students.

(6) Feedback from physics society representative

Concern: As always, the Society requested a society room to serve as an office as well as a place for students to gather and study.

Deliberation: There is a desire to provide such a room, but no such room is available at the moment. The Society representative is reminded that Rm 522 can be reserved for Society use after 5:00pm.

Concern: A request on providing departmental printing service was made because there is a demand on printing lab reports. Students also suggested if they can submit electronic lab reports instead of hard copies.

Action: As mentioned earlier, the laboratory coordinator (J Lee) has been asked to consider whether these students can submit lab reports electronically.

(7) Report from Dr. Jeremy Lim

- He suggested that students should report to the course coordinators promptly when they encounter problems about teaching and learning.
- He reported that the department will organize Friday gathering once per month.
- He also reported that a departmental newsletter was just published.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

MK YIP (Temporary Secretary)

6th May, 2019