

Meeting 4/24

11 October 2024

For general publication

Present: Miss Rebecca Leonard (Chair), A/Prof Marloes Nitert Dekker, Miss Catherine Mungkaje, Andrea Quispe Soto, Mr Ben Smith (Minutes), Mr Jacob Stead, Mr Daniel Valles, Dr Simon Worrall, Mr Shan Yi

Apologies: Mr Nerya Ashri, Ms Jefita Franklin, Ms Annalise Kerr, Mr Gaofenngwe Khutswane, Ms Isabella McLeod, Ms Raghavi Shankara Guhan

Absent: Nil.

1. Welcome and apologies:

Rebecca Leonard welcomed members to the fourth CSAG meeting of the year and noted the apologies.

2. Recognition:

An Acknowledgment of Country was spoken by the Chairperson, in recognition of the traditional owners of the land on which the meeting was taking place.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held 30 August 2024:

The minutes of the meeting held 30 August 2024, having been circulated to group members and published on the School website with SCMB constituent students notified via email that the minutes were available, were taken as read and were confirmed by those who had been present.

4. Business arising out of the minutes:

4.1 Research presentation opportunities

Marloes Dekker relayed feedback from academics regarding research presentation opportunities. The consensus was that additional presentation opportunities beyond those already offered would be difficult to organise. Marloes noted that the new Honours structure being introduced would provide more scope for presentations. Marloes concluded that there are ample opportunities particularly for Honours and Masters students, but work can be done to improve communication of these events to students.

Simon Worrall noted that the SCMB Research Students Symposium would be held 20 November 2024. Open to students of all levels and staff, the symposium features poster presentations, equipment displays, talks from guest speakers and networking opportunities.

5. Art of Science Competition:

Ben Smith shared that a proposal had been made to merge the Art of Science competition and SCMB SciArt competition into a single competition.

The group agreed that merging the competitions would help reduce confusion and a combined prize pool may encourage additional submissions.

Ben resolved to investigate the possibility of combining the Art of Science competition and SCMB SciArt competition into a single competition.

ACTION

Ben

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6. SECaT and SETutor surveys:

Ben Smith noted that SECaT and SETutor surveys would be open between 14 October - 1 November and encouraged members to complete their evaluations.

Rebecca Leonard queried if any attempts were being made to increase the reach of the surveys.

Simon Worrall responded that new survey systems were being explored.

Ben stated that SETutor survey links had been provided to all course coordinators to post on their Blackboard sites, and where possible surveys would also be conducted in class.

Shan Yi asked if SETutor feedback impacted tutor allocations for future semesters.

Ben confirmed that SETutor scores and academic feedback was taken into account when allocating tutors for future semesters.

Rebecca asked if students undertaking the Honours component of the Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) program were eligible to apply for tutoring positions even though they did not currently hold a completed undergraduate degree.

Ben confirmed that students in this position would qualify for tutoring positions, and resolved to update the tutor recruitment advertisement wording for future semesters to reflect this.

Ben

7. CHEM2060 feedback:

A comment was submitted by the BSc/BAdvSc 2 – Chemistry Majors representative:

I would like to briefly raise a comment on the in-semester exam for CHEM2060 which I have seen across the cohort of 2nd year chemistry. This is that the exam was considered by most as too long relative to the amount of time provided to complete it, with the mass majority of students I talked to stating that they simply could not finish the exam on time.

The course coordinator provided the following response:

Thank you for sharing that feedback, I will discuss it further with our teaching team.

In reply, the exam was a typical composition which is 30 mins for Section A (Paul Shaw) and 60 mins for Section B (my section) and the average was higher in my section compared to last year. In fact, this year, I had actually reduced the total number of questions by 1 but added a small part question to the remaining five questions.

There were some students who had not attempted some questions in the main exam but also many that had attempted all. I do monitor for difficulty and completion and had not felt that was evident this year.

Finally, in previous years, students have given me immediate feedback when they felt the exam was difficult/too long and I received none before this email to date.

Marloes Nitert Dekker noted that examinations undergo checks by multiple academics before being finalised to mitigate these sorts of issues.

Ben Smith stated that concerns about assessment items could be submitted as part of SECaT feedback

The group agreed that the coordinators response adequately addressed the concerns that had been raised.

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8. Open Discussion:

Shan Yi stated that faster lab report feedback for CHEM3016 would be beneficial.

Rebecca Leonard noted that the content covered in CHEM3020 was largely Biochemistry focussed, and queried if there had been any discussions on potentially rebadging this course to be BIOC coded.

Marloes Nitert Dekker noted that the staff representatives had discussed ways to make students more aware of their cohort representative in the group, and proposed course coordinators share CSAG representative details in introductory lectures. Marloes asked the group how they would feel about having their details and pictures shared in this context.

Jacob Stead replied that currently students were largely unaware of their representatives within the group.

Catherine Mungkaje agreed that students did not know who their representatives were.

Rebecca proposed the representatives details could be shared in the welcome announcement for each course on Blackboard at the start of the semester.

The group agreed that sharing the members details via Blackboard would be beneficial for reaching the student cohorts.

Rebecca Leonard queried if there was any possibility of adding an Honours representative to the group.

Marloes resolved to investigate this possibility.

Marloes

9. Next meeting:

This was the final CSAG meeting for 2024

Ben Smith confirmed that 2025 membership would be finalised in the new year, and thanked all members for participating in the group.

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