Staff News

Birkbeck UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

No. 17 June & July 2005

FROM THE MASTER

I devoted most of my last column to the then upcoming institutional audit of our teaching by the QAA. I am now delighted to report that we have heard from the QAA indicating that they have "broad confidence" in the quality of our teaching and assessment procedures.

This is the highest grade that the QAA awards, and so we have every reason to be proud of the results of their assessment. We will receive a detailed letter during August which will indicate some areas where we could improve in the future. Interestingly, these include the QAA support for our intention to conduct a review of our committee structures to see whether they provide the optimum means of conducting the College's business in the most efficient manner possible. Our intention to carry out such a review was based upon the outcome of the staff survey (about which I also wrote in my last column), where a number of staff indicated that they found the College's committee structure over-bureaucratic.

The highly successful outcome of the QAA visit reflects not only our commitment to teaching, but also the efforts of a large number of staff who were involved in the visit either at the institutional level or in the discipline audit trails which were carried out for four of our teaching areas. I congratulate all the staff involved, and particularly Professor Stephen Frosh, the Pro-Vice-Master for Teaching and Learning, who led our team, Alison Wood of the Registry, who was responsible for the link between the College and the QAA Team, and Diana Driscoll, who led the Registry through the audit and all its other activities during the unfortunate absence of the Registrar due to illness.

Our commitment to teaching and its development at Birkbeck is also indicated by a new development adjacent to our new main entrance. As you know, following the completion of the on-going landscaping project, we will turn round the main entrance of the College so that it faces on to Torrington Square. This will provide an attractive campus-like environment linking our main building, the Clore Management Centre and the new Wolfson Centre for Brain Development and Function on which construction has just started. It will also link us more closely to our neighbours, including the University of London itself, SOAS and the Institute of Education.

The area immediately adjacent to the main entrance will be developed as a Learning Centre providing 24-hour seven-day-a-week access to information on Birkbeck courses, financial support for study at Birkbeck and other assistance, such as language courses, aids to study etc. We hope that it will be possible to make the main entrance to the Library via this Centre so that our new Library is reached via a modern entrance rather than via the old part of the Library as at present. I am delighted to report that Mrs Phyllis Somers, who was made a Fellow of Birkbeck this year, has continued her generous support for us by providing a £300,000 donation for this Centre via Neutral Estates Ltd. Further support for the Centre will be provided by Capital Funds allocated to us by HEFCE for teaching development, and detailed planning work for the Centre has already begun.

The HEFCE Capital Funds awarded to us for Research and Teaching will also be used to purchase the houses at 27, 28, and 29 Russell Square from the University of London. As our Faculty of Continuing Education currently occupies 25 and 26 Russell Square, whilst our School of English and Humanities occupies Number 30, this purchase will provide us with a continuous terrace of houses, allowing us to obtain long leases from the University with the potential for future development.

The newly-acquired properties will be used in part to house the Wiener Library, which is a leading archive for the study of religious and racial hatred. Although our plans for the remainder of the properties are still under discussion, it is hoped to co-locate adjacent to the Wiener Library aspects of the College's work which will complement their activities, so creating an Institute for the Study of Religious and Racial Diversity and Intolerance.

As well as providing support for these developments, the HEFCE Capital Funds which we received for Research and Teaching will also be used to purchase new equipment for the Schools of Crystallography, Earth Sciences and Psychology, with these purchases taking place as a joint effort with UCL, so further cementing our scientific collaborations with them. Indeed, because these purchases will be made by two

independent institutions acting together, we will avoid the 10% payment which must normally be made by the College's own funds to match the 90% payment made by HEFCE and which is waived when purchases are made jointly by two institutions, as part of a collaborative activity.

The excellence of our research and teaching has allowed us to receive a significant allocation from HEFCE for these research and teaching projects. When taken together with the excellent outcome of our institutional audit, I believe they provide the correct basis for us to move forward as an independent institution fulfilling our mission of providing high quality part-time teaching in an environment of research excellence.

David S Latchman

MAJOR RESEARCH FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH CLOSING DATES IN THE NEAR FUTURE

September

1	Medical Research Council – Grants for Trials
1	Royal Society – Short Visits to or from the UK
12	Nuffield Foundation – New Career Development Fellowships in the Social Sciences
14	Next cut-off date for BBSRC Responsive Research Grants
15	Natural Environment Research Council – Small Research Grants
16	Economic & Social Research Council – Research Centres
21	EU – FP6 – IST 5th call
22	Arts & Humanities Research Council – Research Leave

The College subscribes to the Research Funding Database, Research Research Ltd http://www.ResearchResearch.com to enable members of staff to keep up-to-date with research funding opportunities and news, both in the UK and Europe. Any student or member of staff with a "bbk.ac.uk" email address can log on to the site. Academic staff also have username and password accounts enabling them to set up email alerts under their specialist subject areas. If you have consulted the database and require further information, including advice on the Green Card procedure, please contact the Research Grants & Contracts Office on extension 6097 or by email to m.barthram@bbk.ac.uk

Research Grants & Contracts Office

GRANTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Dr S Green & Dr P Barber, Psychology
Extension of £27,708 from Postar Ltd
Grant entitled "Object Visibility of Targets in Cluttered Real-world Scenes"
8.2.04 – 31.12.05

Dr D Horn, Geography
£15,790 from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Sub-contractor – University of Brighton)
Grant entitled "Influence of Permeability on the Performance of Shingle and Mixed Beaches"
15.2.05 – 14.2.06

Dr E Orlova, Crystallography
£53,421 from the Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council (Sub-contractor – University of Leeds)
Grant entitled "Structure and Function of Intracellular Domains of the Heag Potassium Channel"
1.1.06 – 31.12.06

Dr A Richards, Psychology
£19,167 from the Bial Foundation, Portugal (Sub-contractor – University of Manchester)
Grant entitled "The Emotional Stroop Effect: cognitive, emotional and physiological aspects"
1.1.05 – 31.12.06

Dr M Thomas, Psychology
£3,204 from the British Academy
Grant entitled "The Functional Basis of Specific Language Impairment in the Brain"
1.6.05 – 31.5.06

Professor G Waksman, Crystallography
Additional £68,681 from the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases and the National Institute of Health, USA (Sub-contractor – Washington University)
Grant entitled "Structure of Proteins Involved in Bacterial Pathogenesis"
1.10.03 – 30.4.06

MAY & JUNE NEW STAFF

Mr S Anand, Distance Learning Co-ordinator in Geographical Information Science, Geography, 9.5.05
Mrs K Ball, Secretary, Geography, 9.5.05
Ms L Chapman, Administrator, Earth Sciences, 23.5.05
Mr P Crompton, MIS Support Officer, Central Computing Services, 23.5.05
Miss C Daltrey, Clerical Assistant, Continuing Education, 13.6.05
Dr T Daviter, Post-doctoral Research Assistant, Crystallography, 1.6.05
Ms V Eatough, Lecturer, Psychology, 21.6.05
Mr D Frampton, Mechanical Chargehand, Estates & Facilities, 3.5.05
Dr M Hansard, Research Assistant, Psychology, 3.5.05
Mr D Jennings, Library Attendant, Library, 27.6.05
Mr J Lugo, Executive Officer, Continuing Education, 6.6.05
Ms J Payne, Registry Assistant, Registry, 2.6.05
Dr A Perry-Kessaris, Senior Lecturer, Law, 1.5.05
Dr H Ponstingl, Post-doctoral Research Assistant, Crystallography, 1.6.05
Dr S Poppleton, Post-doctoral Research Assistant, Management & Organizational Psychology, 1.5.05
Mr S Riley, Electrical Chargehand, Estates & Facilities, 3.5.05
Mr T Russell, Executive Officer, Continuing Education, 23.5.05

Please send all items for inclusion in the Staff News to Chris Terrey, Secretary's Office, or by email: c.terrey@bbk.ac.uk

Mr C Stocks, Conference Manager, Estates & Facilities, 1.6.05

MAY & JUNE STAFF LEAVERS

Mrs M Adkins, Research Officer, Psychology, 30.6.05
Dr M Brussoni, Research Associate, Psychology, 30.6.05
Dr P Damrau, Lecturer, Languages, Linguistics & Culture, 30.6.05
Mrs S Dixon, Research Assistant, Psychology, 31.5.05
Mr A Doyle, Clerical Assistant, Psychology, 30.6.05
Mrs N Gohil, Research Officer, Psychology, 2.5.05
Mrs J Gough, Programme Manager, Continuing Education, 12.6.05
Miss J King, Executive Officer, Continuing Education, 22.6.05
Dr S Krljes, Post-doctoral Research Assistant, Psychology, 23.6.05
Miss L McInerney, Programme Manager, Continuing Education, 30.6.05
Mr A Motin, Clerical Assistant, Continuing Education, 29.6.05
Ms M O'Donnell, Head of Development, External Relations, 30.6.05
Mrs C Sherman, Executive Officer, Continuing Education, 5.6.05
Dr B Smith, Post-doctoral Research Assistant, Crystallography, 19.6.05
Mrs S Smith, Research Officer, Psychology, 30.6.05
Mr C Templer, Mechanical Tradesperson, Estates & Facilities, 30.6.05
Mrs C Watts, Executive Officer, Continuing Education, 29.5.05

OBITUARY

The College regrets to announce the sudden death, on 9 June, of Mr Lakshman Sinnadurai, aged 66 years. Mr Sinnadurai worked as Lecturer in Mathematics from October 1966 until his retirement in September 2004.

HONOURS AND DISTINCTIONS

Dr R Cox, Continuing Education, has received the Birkbeck Award for Innovation in Teaching in recognition of her work towards innovative delivery of Personal Development Planning Guidance, in respect of the Understanding London Foundation Degree

Dr S Shaw-Miller, History of Art, Film & Visual Media, has been appointed Honorary Research Fellow at the Royal Academy of Music

Miss E Topolovec, External Relations, has won an international scholarship to attend the Council for Advancement and Support of Education Summer Institute in Alumni Relations in Nashville, Tennessee, USA, 31.7.05 – 4.8.05

HONORARY RESEARCH FELLOWS

Professor M Bevir, History, Classics & Archaeology, 1.7.05 – 9.9.05
Dr P Datta, Politics & Sociology, 1.10.05 – 30.9.06
Dr F Jabar Mahmood, Politics & Sociology, extended 1.10.05 – 30.9.07

ASSOCIATE RESEARCH FELLOW

Dr B Dhadda, Law, 1.10.05 – 30.9.08

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Dr J Andermann, Languages, Linguistics & Culture
To take up a Visiting Professorship at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, USA
11.1.06 – 6.5.06

Professor H Downes, Earth Sciences
To work in the Lunar & Planetary Institute, Houston, Texas, USA
1.10.05 – 30.6.06

Dr P Gardner-Chloros, Languages, Linguistics & Culture
To carry out research
1.8.05 – 31.7.06

Professor W Rowe, Languages, Linguistics & Culture and English & Humanities
To take up a William Bonsall Visiting Professorship at Stanford University, California, USA
10.1.06 – 10.6.06

Dr L Trenberth, Management & Organizational Psychology
To write a commissioned text on Human Resource Management and Sport; to attend the British Psychological Association Conference and to write a journal article from data already collected
9.1.06 – 24.4.06

RESEARCH CONFERENCE GRANTS

Dr J Andermann, Languages, Linguistics & Culture
To present a paper entitled "Museum Shopping: ¿hay algo de nuevo en las vitrinas?" at a conference at the Universidad de San Andrés in Buenos Aires, Argentina
£300, 24.7.05 – 31.8.05

Dr S Clucas, English & Humanities
To present a paper entitled "Early English Mechanics: Thomas Harriot and Walter Warner on colliding bodies" at a conference in Beijing, China
£300, 23.7.05 – 1.8.05

Dr U Coope, Philosophy
To attend the Symposium Aristotelicum, devoted to Nicomachean Ethics VII, in Venice, Italy
£146.66, 10.7.05 – 17.7.05

Dr E Dzelzainis, English & Humanities
To attend a conference of the British Association of Victorian Studies, entitled "Victorians in the Long View: contrast and continuities", at the University of Gloucestershire
£281, 5.9.05 – 7.9.05

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Dr A Finlay, English & Humanities
To organise four sessions, chair two and present a paper entitled "Elegy in 'Egil's Saga'" at a conference on Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds
£269, 11.7.05 – 14.7.05

Dr M Fricker, Philosophy
To attend a conference on Feminist Philosophy at the University of Sheffield
£69.50, 21.5.05

Dr M Msiska, English & Humanities
To present a paper entitled "Rulers and the Ruled: the idea of the hegemonic in Wole Soyinka's work" at a conference at the University of South Africa, Pretoria
£300, 2.8.05 – 8.8.05

Dr Z Opacic, History of Art, Film & Visual Media
To attend a conference in Cambridge on "Art and Pilgrimage (600 - 1600)" and contribute to the round table discussion
£107, 7.7.05 – 9.7.05

Dr N Wachsmann, History, Classics & Archaeology
To present a paper entitled "Violence in Nazi Prisons and Camps" at the Fourth Cultural History Conference on "Cultures of Violence" at King's Manor, University of York
£80, 21.4.05

STAFF INFORMATION

Dr J-M Dewaele, Languages, Linguistics & Culture, has been invited as a plenary speaker at the Language Learning Round Table Conference entitled "The Role of Individual Differences in Second Language Behavior" in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on 13.9.05

Professor L Nead, History of Art, Film and Visual Media, joins the Leverhulme Trust's Research Awards Advisory Committee from 1.10.05

STUDENT PRIZES FOR 2005

Fay Hicks Memorial Award
Mr D Heard & Ms R Maguire
Earth Sciences
Joint winners of a prize of £300, awarded annually to a self-financing student of Earth Sciences, distinguished by outstanding enthusiasm and perseverance in his/her studies

BRIEFING FROM THE MASTER

Following on from the recent series of lunches which the Master held with staff, four more events have been planned for the period September 2005 - April 2006.

The format for these events will be a lunch-time briefing given by the Master where there will be an opportunity for questions. The briefing will be followed by a lunch. Further details will be sent out nearer the time, but you may care to note the dates:

- Thursday 22 September 2005
- Tuesday 15 November 2005
- Tuesday 21 February 2006
- Wednesday 05 April 2006

Rosemary Carter
PA to the Master

IN AID OF THE MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION

I am raising funds for the Motor Neurone Disease Association, by climbing Mount Olympus in Greece in September 2005. Although there is currently no cure, a remarkable amount can be done to improve the life of those living with this extremely cruel, debilitating and fatal disease.

There are more details on the Staff Message Board of the Birkbeck website.

I appreciate every bit of help you can give, no matter how small. You can donate directly online at http://www.justgiving.com/mountolympuschallenge
or send me a cheque made out to the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Marjorie Hoek
Business Relations Unit
Room 355 Malet Street

IN THE NEWS

If you would like to talk to External Relations about media coverage, whether it be for research, curriculum development, staff appointments or student stories, call Catherine Doherty, Media and Publicity Officer, on 020 7631 6569 or email c.doherty@bbk.ac.uk.

IT FACILITIES DURING THE MAIN BUILDING POWER OUTAGE ON 30-31 JULY 2005

The following CCS services will be affected by the electrical work taking place in the Main Building on 30-31 July and WILL NOT be available:

CCS PC Workstation Rooms
Electronic Mail
General Purpose Unix systems
User Filestore
VPN service
WebCT
MIS systems

The following WILL be available:

Core networking serving other Birkbeck Buildings
Web servers

Further details are available on the CCS Web Site.

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