**Undergraduate Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Nanchang Joint Program in Biomedical Science/Clinical Medicine**

**The minutes of Tuesday 21 May 2019**

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: NCU conference room 310

Staff Members Present:

Dr. Mark Maconochie Chair

Dr. Zhijun Luo Co-Chair

Ms. Yi Yang Vice dean

Jane Qu Secretary

Student Members Present:

Yunnyi Lling Yr1

Yujia Zhai Yr1

Gan Tang Yr1

Yifang Song Yr2

Yanshuang Lv Yr2

Yuqing Miao Yr2

Xiatian Li Yr3

Xueling Wang Yr3

Qirui Liu Yr3

In attendance:

Shengnan Wang Junior Administrator

**Part 1 -Preliminary Items**

1. Welcome

The Chair and Co-chair welcomed members to the meeting of the Nanchang SSLC

2. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting

The committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on December 3rd, 2018 as an accurate record of proceedings.

**Part 2-Programme Delivery and other matters**

Students reported the following issues on learning and teaching matters

3. A yr3 student reported that for project module snu301, some of the PIs do not care about the student experimental learning skill at all, students cannot get effective guidance, and some experimental data is not allowed to be taken away. Dr Luo responded that if the supervisor is not patient with students, does not allow data to be presented for the project carried out by the student, then they should contact Dr. Luo, but students must follow the rules. Students should tell Dr. Luo which PI has not been good and the reasons why, but please avoid direct confrontation with PI.

4. A yr3 student also reported that compared to SNU 309 project, on SNU301 they cannot get direct face to face guidance and supervision from QM lectures, which is not standard. Dr. Maconochie questioned that if this is true for all QM supervisors. He noted that if students think they are not by being properly supervised, please provide him the names of supervisors not carrying out their duties and he will discuss this issue with them. Students can use video chat if lecturers are not in Nanchang, but if they are in Nanchang, then there should be the possibility of face to face communication. But students need to be understanding, that QM supervisors only can provide so much guidance. If video chat is a route students want to pursue, then maybe something like one-hour guidance every week for the whol supervisory group, it is simply not possible to offer 12hrs per weeks for 12 individual students for the 6 weeks the project runs.

5. A yr3 student also reported that some supervisors did not reply to emails sent on snu301. Dr. Maconochie says he needs to talk to them to clarify the issues, but needs to know the supervisors at fault from the students to take this further. All students should be able to send emails and supervisors should be reply in a reasonable time frame; he suggested maybe QQ is a good way to communicate directly and fast if their supervisors use this. We will try to improve the way to communicate between students and lecturers

6. Yifan Song from Yr2 students reported that PDP support classes for yr2 students are inefficient and useless, many of the classmates reported that they do not receive useful feedback about their essays. Most of them think this mini class is not worth their effort to take them every other week for an hour. Students want more feedback from mini PDP classes. Dr. Maconochie responded that as to the issue of not receiving enough feedback, he will feedback this to Sabita. However Teachers cannot go through every single essay every week, but teachers will point out what are the good points and what are bad points that routinely arise in essays, so students know what and how to write in a good essay. It was explained this is due in part to peer feedback. Students said they are not qualified to write or mark good essays, so some feedback would help. Dr MAconochie says the issue comes back to students to be able to see what is a good essay as part of being able to write a good essay when they read and go through others essays; students need to reach certain level in order to be able to write good essay. But Dr Maconochie will tell Sabita that maybe some grades could be involved, to make this class work better. Dr. Maconochie mentioned that Chinese education in part involves students being told exactly what to do, but in the UK, students have to learn to be more independent, our JP students also learn that you do not just accept knowledge or instruction, it is very different experience from traditional Chinese Higher Education.

7. Huaye Shi a yr2 student reported that some Chinese lecturers have poor English speaking skills and the students do not understand what they say in lectures, and as a result they feel like the knowledge learned on these classes is limited. Students suggested the Chinese teacher should speak Chinese when giving lectures. Dr. Maconochie noted that the programme cannot let the lessons be taught in Chinese, all the lectures have to be taught in English language because this is UK program and examined in English. Also it is part of the MoE agreement and if we are caught teaching English courses in Chinese, the program could potentially be closed down. He suggested students should be patient with Chinese lecturers as English lectuers are patient with them, he hopes students are very supportive and sensitive to lecturers speaking in a non-native language. The more they teach in English, the better they will get!

8. A student from yr1 reported that they spent too much time on the poster for the Genes and Chromosomes course. ,Because it is too difficult, the want to make this less difficult and postpone this to yr2 or Yr3. Dr. Maconochie noted that he has sympathy to students if it is too difficult as students spent too much time on it, and have lost the balance of life and study. However, this meeting is to give the opportunity to represent students themselves, and he cannot comment if it’s too difficult without further investigation. As to postpone the poster to yr2 or Yr3 because it is difficult, Dr Maconochie was not convinced by the reasoning, because the more students are presenting posters/talks early, the better their results later in the programme. However he will look into the material to see if it is too difficult.

 9. A Yr1 student reported that the lecturer speaks too fast in Genes and Chromosomes course, they request if it possible that the lecturer could speak a bit slower, especially at the informative parts. Dr. Maconochie noted he will ask Laurent to repeat the important points, and will check with Laurent.

10. A yr1 student reported that uploaded PDFs on QMplus are a bit disordered, as they are not named after lecture 1 lecture 2 and so on. Students in Y1 ask if it is possible to make the uploaded materials easy to find, and also only 13/20 Pdfs were uploaded for one of the lecturers. Dr. Maconochie noted he will check with the lecturers.

11. A Yr1 student reported that the lecture given by Sabita and Selena is less useful for them. Students want more technical stuff like genes and chromosomes. Dr Maconochie noted the whole idea about this class time on PDP is what students will find continues after University, as part of CPD (continuing professional development) where you make a record as evidence of continued learning, If students want to become a doctor, a doctor is expected to record their learning on aa form of portfolio. Students have begun to make record. PDP seems strange to students, but we all learn things in different ways and this course helps students understand this and other study skills. , We recognize this is very new experience for the students but it should be a very useful exercise, and if students follow the course, overall should make students’ performance better. However he will ask Sabita to see if she can make more relevant topics for students.

12. A yr2 student reported on the practical, that Guilia’s group is so strict, cannot use phone etc, and other groups don’t care, so is not fair. Dr. Maconochie noted group work being affected by cheating students and if one of the group members use phone, the group work penalty is shared. Dr Maconochie will inform lecturers the need for all classes to be treated consistently

Students reported following issue on Timetable

13. Yuqing Miao, a yr2 student, reported that the timetable does not set up evenly across the semester. There is too much free time at the start of a semester. The classes before exams are too intensive. Dr. Maconochie noted will have to look up the timetables as did not have them to hand, and will look into this more carefully. But sometimes this is the case for example if the timetable is set late due to adjustments being made for Chinese holidays, or visa issues for lecturers and also availability of the lecturers to travel, these all coulcontribute to the uneven spread this semester. It is always possible that next semester maybe the same problem will happen but we will try to make sure the lectures are spread across the semester as evenly as possible. The suggestion was to front load lectures in the semester – have them more at the start. Dr. Maconochie asked student representatives to ask around and report how many students want to make this change, would like to have more lectures earlier on. Dr. Luo noted earlier is better than later, because later will in the semester it gets busy, but he understands that a whole week of holiday in China make things hard to arrange for smooth timetabling.

Students reported Specific issue

14. A year 3 student complained about being sent to another campus for lectures (Materials Building), it is too far to walk

Dr Maconochie noted that we only teach in the Materials Building when we do not have enough room to teach on the Medical School campus. Currently all when we have yr 2 teaching to 250 studnets and two year 3 modules running at the same time, all need the lecture hall and we don’t have other rooms. Then we have to use the Materials Building. He understands it is a long walk, and will try not send students there. The good news is that next semester even when we have overlaping courses, we should be able to fit in the teaching space on the Medical campus, so students should not need to have any lectures on the main campus.

Students Requesting

15. A yr1 student requested permission to use ipad in classes because it is easy to take notes

Dr. Maconochie disagreed to permit this. He stated the QM will reinforce the recently established Chinese govt policy on the use of smart devices in lectures. He noted that he had recently visited a classroom and saw students with ipads/laptops, 50% of students were doing the work related to the lecture and another 50% using their computers message on QQ on their computers or unrelated activities, and they are not listening to what the lecturer said. Students should know the PPT is the minimum knowledge every student needs to know, if students use computer or ipad, they will not listen to the important elements that build knowledge on the basis of the PPT. So the answer is no to this request. .

Minutes submitted by Jane Qu