

**Staff-Student Consultative Committee**  
**Minutes for Meeting No. 1 of 2023/2024**

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2023

**Time:** 3:20 p.m.

**Venue:** Zoom meeting

**Present:**

Dr. F. C. C. Ling (Chairman, Staff representative)

Prof. H.F. Chau (Staff representative)

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

Dr. M. K. Yip (Staff representative)

Mr. Chiu Shi Yuen (1<sup>st</sup> year representative)

Mr. Yu Wing Hin (2<sup>nd</sup> year representative)

Mr. Fung Chiu Wah (3<sup>rd</sup> year representative)

Mr. Chen Peng (MSc in Physics representative)

Mr. To Chung Cheung (Physics Society)

**Apology:**

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

Dr. Judy Chow (Staff representative)

Dr. Jenny Lee (Staff representative)

Mr. Chan Tim Lok (4<sup>th</sup> year representative)

Mr. Martin Yiu (Postgraduate student representative)

**(1) Feedback from 1st year student representative**

*Concern:* Students reported that PHYS1150 (Problem Solving in Physics) was rather hard. However, they admitted that this course prepared them well and effectively for their future study in physics. Students also pointed out that for those who had knowledge of Module M2 in HKDSE Mathematics were able to manage this course comfortably. For those who had rather weak training in mathematics had turned to PHYS1250 (Fundamental Physics).

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the course instructor.

*Concern:* Students reported that the first chapter of “Selected Topics on Essential Mathematics” was rather new and difficult. The remaining chapters were fine.

NB: “Selected Topics on Essential Mathematics” is a supplementary learning material for newcomers who plan to revise and refresh their math knowledge at the beginning of the semester. It has been posted on the MOODLE page of PHYS1150 to support students’ study. It covers basic algebra and calculus in high-school level; a summary of useful formulae and solutions to exercises are included for self-learning. The first chapter is about “Theory of Equation”.

*Deliberation:* Dr. M.K. Yip pointed out that some new topics (i.e. mainly in Chapter One) were added to the self-learning material such that it didn’t bore students. He had tried to avoid repeating most old stuffs in high schools over and over. There was a balance on both “new knowledge” and “old knowledge” in the handout.

*Concern:* Students reported that the MATLAB HW of PHYS1150 (Problem Solving in Physics) was hard. There was a gap between the HW problems and the materials conducted in the workshop.

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the MATLAB instructor.

## **(2) Feedback from 2nd year student representative**

*Concern:* Students reported that the attendance of tutorial class was rather low. Tutorial class conducted by teacher had better attendance compared with that conducted by TA.

*Deliberation:* Dr. Jason Pun reported the manpower issue related to the teaching of tutorial class. Most sessions were conducted by TAs but not by teachers.

*Concern:* Students suggested if the teacher/TA would read through the work of individual students and provide individual support instead of giving answers and explanation to the problems using the routine approach. They also proposed a new approach to promote attendance, i.e. to encourage students posting questions to the forum before the tutorial class; the questions could be some points of main difficulty arising from the tutorial problems. Then the teachers/TAs tried to answer them during the tutorial class.

*Deliberation:* Dr. Jason Pun agreed with the suggestion and he would like to bring this issue to the department.

*Concern:* Students asked that if a one-hour laboratory lecture could be arranged before the lab session. They suggested if the lecture could elaborate more on the connectedness of the class lecture and the experiment to be done in the lab.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling reported that Lab TAs had used to offer briefing sessions before the lab. The sessions covered an introduction and then the technical details of the experiment, e.g. the operation of equipment.

*Concern:* Students asked that if some introductory courses, e.g. PHYS2261 and PHYS2150, could be repeated in both semesters.

*Deliberation:* Dr. Jason Pun pointed out that the proposed arrangement had manpower restriction. He agreed to bring this matter to the Department for further discussion.

### **(3) Feedback from 3rd year student representative**

*Concern:* Students reported that they had difficulty doing PHYS3760 (Physics Laboratory). They mentioned that most of the experiments required knowledge from PHYS3XXX. However, many of them had training in PHYS2XXX courses only.

*Deliberation:* Prof. H.F. Chau stated again the pre-requisite of PHYS3760. Ideally, students were expected to complete training on four PHYS3XXX courses before enrollment. However, the reality told us that most students had taken some of them instead of all of them.

*Deliberation:* Dr. Jason Pun suggested filling the academic gaps by supplementary notes (i.e. the necessary knowledge) to the lab manuals. He also proposed to post the recorded lab video (recorded during the pandemic) to support teaching.

*Concern:* Students had concern on the lab of PHYS3851 (Atomic and Nuclear Physics), in particular the gamma ray spectroscopy. They mentioned that they had no hand-on experiment but solely watching the TA to perform it.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling pointed out that the number of equipment of this kind (very specific) was few in the lab. Moreover, the experiment required handling radioactive substance, students were prohibited to do so because they were not radiation workers.

*Concern:* Students reported that the HW problems of PHYS3351 (Quantum Mechanics) required tedious calculations. They also asked if the hand-written notes could be updated to printed copy.

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the course instructor.

*Concern:* Students suggested if the hand-written lecture notes of PHYS3150 (Theoretical Physics) could become printed document.

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the course instructor.

*Concern:* Students asked if students enrolled to Major in Physics (Intensive) before 2022/23 were eligible to take STAT1600 (Statistics: ideas and concepts).

*Deliberation:* Dr. Jason Pun pointed out that STAT1603 (Introductory statistics) was cancelled. Students should take STAT1600 as a replacement course. He suggested posting such new information on the department webpage. However, the Faculty webpage about the curriculum for the old cohort could not be changed.

#### **(4) Feedback from 4th year student representative**

The committee will collect comments after the meeting.

#### **(5) Feedback from MSc in Physics representative**

*Concern:* Students reported that the workload in HW was heavy but the course weighting of it was low. They added that the HW problems were difficult and the heavy workload influenced their study on the capstone research project. They suggested if the teachers could lower their workload.

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the Programme coordinator.

*Concern:* Students reported that the contents of PHYS8852 (Photonics and Metamaterials) were too much and too hard to digest.

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the course instructor.

*Concern:* Students reported that the contents of PHYS8351 (Graduate Quantum Mechanics) were too much and too hard to digest. They added that the workload of HW was too heavy because there were three HWs before the mid-term.

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the course instructor.

*Concern:* Students asked if the sequence of teaching in PHYS8201 (Basics Research Methods in Physical Science) could be changed. They suggested putting the module of Theoretical Physics after

the mid-term because the useful knowledge about symmetry would then be covered in chapter three in PHYS8351 (Graduate Quantum Mechanics).

*Action:* The issue will be reflected to the course instructor.

*Concern:* Students asked if there could be orientation for them such that they could know more about the department, i.e. the teaching, research activities and facilities in the department. Students would like to make use this opportunity knowing each other.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling suggested the department to organize orientation (or activity of similar nature) for the MSc students. He reported that there was no orientation organized by the university (for postgraduate research students). However, there was a workshop which focused on teaching duties because postgraduate research students were TAs too.

*Concern:* Students would like to know the grade criteria.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling reported that there was no curving on grades but an absolute grade standard stated on the course description. There was no restricted percentage about the letter grades. Students should consult the teachers for the grade standard of each course.

## **(6) Feedback from postgraduate representative**

The committee will collect comments after the meeting.

## **(7) Feedback from Physics Society**

*Concern:* Students asked if the department could help out and promote the activities organized by the society. They also reported that the Physics Society could hardly access the mainland students. Even though there were activities to be held, they had difficulty to contact the mainland students and local students.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling agreed to help out the promotion work. The committee members of the society should feel free to inform him if they need any support organizing career talks or other events, he would try to invite guests/alumnus. The department is glad to advertise the upcoming activities through sending out bulk emails to targeted students. The society is also encouraged to hang posters at the corridor near the department office. He recalled that the society had organized annual dinner and career talks before the pandemic.

*Deliberation:* Dr. Jason Pun pointed out that the department did not have any name record of Year One physics students before the official major/minor declaration. The society should better promote their activities to Year One Physics students during the class of PHYS1150.

*Concern:* Students asked if the department would organize open house. They mentioned that the Faculty of Engineering had organized this kind of activity, i.e. setting up games in booths for people to play and watch. They added that it is not the kind of JUPAS Information Day.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling described that this kind of activity was seldom organized by the Department due to limited resources, manpower and time. However, the Department would like to organize lab tours for undergraduates such that they knew more about the teaching and research activities in the department. Dr. Jason Pun suggested organizing guided tour for undergraduates at the beginning of semester two.

*Concern:* Students asked if the department could donate to their activities.

*Deliberation:* Dr. F.C.C. Ling reported that the teachers were very pleased to donate to the activity organized by the society. The committee members should send the request to SSCC through him.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

MK YIP (Temporary Secretary)

5<sup>th</sup> December, 2023