



Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies

CONSTITUTION

Adopted by the Arts Faculty Board Meeting of 29 October 2003

1. PURPOSE AND ROLE

The Centre for Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies is an interdisciplinary, inter-school research and teaching unit, which from January 2004 will be administered on behalf of the Faculty by the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics. It is responsible for three main areas of work: Comparative Literature; Comparative Cultural Studies; Critical Theory.

Comparative Literature is the study of literary texts in ways that go beyond particular national or linguistic boundaries. Comparative literary studies are of two main kinds: substantive studies of the literature of two or more languages or cultures; and generalising studies of the literary process itself. At undergraduate level literary texts are studied in English translation, but from honours students are required to read them in the original language.

Comparative Cultural Studies is the study of literature in its political and social contexts and in relation to other arts and media. It investigates the interrelationships between the literary canon and non-canonical cultural texts, spaces and practices; it studies these in relation to their various social, historical and ideological contexts.

Critical Theory denotes various contemporary approaches to textual and cultural theory deriving in the main part, either directly or indirectly, from European philosophical traditions. These include: hermeneutics, phenomenology, structuralism and semiotics, post-structuralism and deconstruction, post-Marxian ideology critique, post-Freudian psychoanalysis, feminist theory, postcolonial theory and ecocriticism.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Membership of the Centre comprises:

all Faculty of Arts academic staff who teach in the Centre's programmes (ie. current CLS or CRT coded units);

all emeritus staff who have previously taught in the Centre's programmes (any CLS, CRT or GCL coded units);

any administrative staff permanently seconded to the Centre.

Any member of the Faculty may, with the approval of their Head of School, submit a new unit proposal for adoption by the Centre. After any such proposal has been approved and adopted by a Centre Staff Meeting and by the relevant School and Faculty committees, the staff member concerned shall become a full member of the Centre.

All Centre members are also entitled to attend and vote at meetings of the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, but only those employed in the School may vote on financial matters.

3. DECISION-MAKING

The Centre Staff Meeting is the Centre's authoritative decision-making body.

All members of the Centre are entitled to attend and vote at all meetings.

Two Postgraduate Representatives, elected from amongst their own number, are entitled to attend and vote at all meetings.

The Director of the Centre is required to arrange at least one Centre Staff Meeting per semester. Detailed written Agenda and detailed written Minutes of all meetings must be circulated by the Director to all Centre members and to their Heads of School.

The academic content of the Centre's programmes is determined by Centre Staff Meetings. In addition, Centre members must negotiate their individual teaching loads, including work in the Centre, with their Heads of School or Section as part of the normal performance management process.

4. OFFICERS

The Centre shall have the following officers:

- a Director, responsible for its overall management and its research seminar programme;
- a Graduate Coordinator, responsible for its postgraduate programmes;
- a Research Coordinator, responsible for its research activities;
- an Honours Coordinator, responsible for its Honours programme;
- an Undergraduate Coordinator, responsible for its undergraduate programmes;
- a Website officer, responsible for its website.

The Director is accountable to the Dean through the Head of School; all other officers are accountable to the Director.

All Centre officers shall be elected by the Centre members, from amongst their own number, at a Centre Staff Meeting.

Any Centre member may stand for any office.

There are no fixed terms for any office. Centre officers are elected either until they choose to resign or until required to do so by a majority vote at a Centre Staff Meeting.

All Centre officers are required to act on behalf of the programme as a whole, as distinct from their own School. Centre officers are required to insure that all contributing Schools receive proper recognition of their contribution to the programme, in terms of undergraduate or supervisory EFTSU, postgraduate completion monies, etc. Any Centre officer found to have deliberately misdirected any such resources towards any particular School will be deemed to be in breach of the duties of their office in the Centre.

The Staff Meeting may make fixed-term deputy or acting appointments to any of these offices.

For all workload purposes, Centre offices shall count as directly equivalent to the corresponding offices within School Sections.

5. PERMANENTLY EMPLOYED STAFF

A small number of academic staff will be employed in the Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies Section of the School. Any staff member whose teaching load is conducted wholly or fractionally in the Centre's programmes may, with the approval of the Director and the relevant Heads of School, be permanently re-located into this Section on either a full-time or fractional basis. The Director of the Centre is Head of this Section.

Employment in the Section requires a higher level of involvement in the Centre's teaching programmes and administration, but does not accord any greater constitutional weight in the Centre's decision-making processes.