

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

**M. Phil in History, Sociology and Philosophy of Science, Technology and Medicine**

**M PHIL SENIOR EXAMINER'S REPORT 2009-10**

The M Phil course was taken by 13 students, of whom 7 achieved Distinction (1<sup>st</sup> Class; final mark between 70-79), and 5 achieved High Performance (final mark between 65-69). No candidate achieved Distinction Starred First (mark 80 and above), and no candidate failed (either overall, or individual pieces of work). (These figures are, as of this report, provisional, as the dissertation mark, and final mark, for one student are still to be approved by the Degree Committee.)

**Prizes**

The *Jennifer Redhead Prize*, for best overall essay performance, was awarded to Katarina Kraus. The *7<sup>th</sup> Annual Rausing Prize*, for best dissertation performance, was awarded to Jesse Olszynko-Gryn.

**Number of students enrolled in the program**

This year the number of students decreased to 13 from 21 in the previous year (2008-9) and 17 the year before (2007-8). This decrease was partly to be expected, due to the introduction of the new Part III, taken by 8 students.

**Unfinished work or work with typographical errors**

A reoccurring theme in the Examiners' Meetings over the year was the issue of how to handle unfinished work, or essays and dissertations containing significantly many typographical errors. The discussions led to the conclusion that at the present time the marking scheme should not be changed to expressly include criteria for dealing with this kind of shortcoming.

**Late submissions**

Four candidates submitted work late without permission granted by the Degree Committee, and two of them lost a significant number of marks (4 and 9, respectively) for submitting their second essay late. As agreed, marks were deducted at the level of one per day late in submission. One candidate was granted a one week extension for his dissertation; as a result the M Phil Examiners' Meeting held on 21 June 2010 was not in the position to consider this mark.

## **External examiner**

Dr Greg Radick (Leeds HPS), the External Examiner, saw a total of 16 pieces of work (including 4 dissertations) out of 52 (30%). The reasons for referral were diverse. Dr Radick saw: the best and worst essays, borderline marks, those essays or dissertations for which there was a wide variation between the examiners' marks and those for which the internal examiners failed to reach an agreement. The Examiners wish to thank Dr Radick for his work, as well as for his well argued decisions of marks. This was the third and last year for Dr Radick as an External Examiner.

## **Recommendations**

The External Examiner suggested that a workshop where examples of excellent work, either essays or dissertations, be organized at which prospective applicants and current students could discuss the preparation of submitted work.

Dr Sorin Bangu

Senior Examiner M Phil 2009-10

5 October 2010