

## Imperial College Union

### FUTURE OF THE DPGS POSITION

*Proposed by the ICU Executive Committee*

#### **Background**

Under the instruction of the Executive Committee, a review of the role of the DPGS was undertaken last term with a view to reforming it to make it easier for postgraduates (both taught and research) to undertake the role as leader of the GSA without running in to inevitable problems relating to the timing of this role's election and the expectations of the rest of the Union.

Three models (and various hybrids) were explored over the Spring term and two emerged as feasible options. The Executive Committee has selected one of these models and is proposing that Union Council endorses it today.

#### **Options considered**

The appended document describes the models that were considered by the Executive Committee in more detail.

The models that were considered were:

1. Full time Sabbatical GSA President
2. Part time paid volunteer GSA officers
3. Volunteer GSA officers with increased staff support

Following consultation with key stakeholders (graduate students, union officers and college officers), model two was ruled out. This left models one and three, which appeared to have equal support amongst the people who were consulted. The Executive Committee strongly supported option three and wish to formally present this option to the Union Council.

#### **Proposal**

By implementing option three, the following changes would be made:

- The DPGS position would be replaced with a the new role entitled "GSA Chair";
- The GSA Chair would become a volunteer position, similar to a Faculty Union President with a seat on the Union Council and Executive Committee;
- The DPGS Office would become the "GSA Office";
- The GSA Committee (along with senior Faculty Union officers and the DPEW) would be supported by a professional, full time member of staff whose role would be primarily focussed on improving representation for postgraduates and supporting events that further this aim.

**Decision required**

1. To endorse this proposal;
2. To replace all references to the Deputy President (Graduate Students) with Graduate Students' Association Chair;
3. To amend the Union Constitution to ensure that the GSA Chair retains a position on the ICU Council, Executive and Management and Planning Group (to be incorporated into the next round of governance changes);
4. To amend the job descriptions in regulation one of the Union Constitution by removing the whole of paragraph 20 (job descriptions for Sabbatical Officers) and inserting the following paragraph under section E (job descriptions for non Sabbatical Officers):

*"23. The Chair of the Graduate Students Association shall:*

- i. Uphold the policy and further the aims and objects of the Union,*
- ii. Be responsible for the development and preliminary interpretation of their Standing Orders.*
- iii. Be responsible for the effective involvement, welfare and representation within both the College and the Union, of students registered on postgraduate courses,*
- iv. Be responsible for co-ordinating the provision of graduate student development and progression within Union activities,*
- v. Support postgraduate students' involvement in all relevant areas of Union and College activity,*
- vi. Liaise with Union and College staff as appropriate including close day-to-day interaction with the staff postgraduate co-ordinator,*
- vii. Attend the relevant Union and College Committees,*
- viii. Be responsible for keeping College informed of graduate students' opinion on academic affairs*
- ix. Represent the Union on external committees as appropriate,*
- x. Report to Union Committees as appropriate,*
- xi. Work with the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) as appropriate to promote the academic interests and welfare concerns of Union graduate members*
- xii. Negotiate other duties with the President.*
- xiii. Carry out such duties as may, from time to time, be laid down by the Council or the Executive Committee."*

**ICU Executive, 23/04/07**