

ICU Council
Monday 29th October

DPEW Report

A note by the Deputy President (Education & Welfare)

This might be a bit brief (*I got carried away after I said that*) and a bit late (*um... sorry!*) but in order for me to finish all the things I am doing at the moment so I can report them to Council on Monday I need to spend less time writing a report and more time actually doing them. I think that made sense.

Meetings

Since the last Council I have attended several (hundred thousand) meetings. The most notable ones of which are:

Environmental Strategy Meeting

Steve, a number of members of ESoc and myself met with Graham Watson from College to discuss College's Environmental Strategy. This meeting was primarily to talk about waste strategy and came out with some very positive ideas. Talks of composting got Adele Peel particularly excited and we had assurances that student input would be welcomed for the implementation of the project. I have since taken to stalking the corridors of other London Colleges taking photos of recycling facilities to ensure we are better than them!

Residences Committee Meeting

This meeting brought some interesting statistics to the table and results of surveys from students living in halls of residence last year. I will be following up in the coming weeks any changes implemented as a result of this analysis and have requested more data from residences. The data will be discussed at the Union Accommodation meeting in a few weeks time.

Westminster Fairtrade Meeting

This meeting occurred at King's College on the Strand. I invited some local Fairtrade Activists to attend and this brought experience from other Boroughs who have already achieved Fairtrade Status. There was good turn out from imperial with the only other student members to turn up! King's, LSE and Imperial will be working together to develop a strategy to help other London Universities gain Fairtrade Status and contacting members of the community, faith groups, trade unions and local industries based in Westminster to put pressure on the Council to work towards becoming a Fairtrade Borough.

Student Portal Project Board

This is one of my favourite projects and is drawing close to completion! The student Portal will enable students to more easily navigate their way around the college intranet and use online resources more efficiently. The Portal will eventually bring together library, registry, outlook, timetabling online learning and other services under a single sign in. I have been asked to present the Student Portal to a number of committees in the coming months. This will involve giving presentations from Faculty to Management Board level.

MADSAC

The Medical and Dental Student Advisory Committee was again a very positive meeting. I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of input I was encouraged to give and have been invited to submit papers to the next Patient Consultation Group at the Medical Centre. This will have the aim of developing a closer working relationship with the medical centre and more collaboration of resources and efforts for upcoming welfare campaigns.

College Website

I was invited to attend a meeting with College Communications along with the Union Communications and Sponsorship Manager to advise on important facilities for the student areas of the new college website. The website will be launched in December and looks very smart, colourful and welcoming. If you would like to see some of the final layout designs please come and see me or visit the blog at <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/webredesign>.

I have also attended meetings with Mary Ritter, Pro Rector for Postgraduate and International Affairs (read more in the President's Report – I didn't think you'd want to hear it twice); Sharine Brown, Head of Residences; Vasa Curcin, Union Liaison to the Wardens Committee and Paddy Jackman, Head of Commercial Services.

Campaigns Meeting

In preparation for the first meeting of RWB I held a campaigns pre-meeting to bring together people interested in hosting campaigns this term and to put forward proposals to the first meeting. This was very well attended and brought up lots of exciting ideas which were then taken to RWB for their approval.

RISE Week

RISE will be taking place from 5th-9th November. The theme is 'Realise Equality, Celebrate Diversity'. Chiraush Patel, Equal opportunities Officer, has been nominated as Campaign Coordinator and some initial interest has been generated from volunteers. I hope we can try and engage more people to get involved over the next week.

We are looking for people to be filmed for interviews on the new college website around the issues of 'Integration on campus' and 'Imperial from an International Students Perspective'. We will be taking photos to make a collage showing ethnic diversity on campus and showing foreign language films at ICU Cinema. There will also be promotions on international food in ICU Catering.

SHAG Week

SHAG Week is 26th-30th November and will see an exciting collaboration between Medsin, Positively Red, Sexpression and the Representation and Welfare Board. Events will raise money for charity as well as support for improved facilities on campus. More about this at the next council. (I wouldn't want to spoil the surprise...)

Representation and Welfare Board

We had the first meeting – whoop whoop! It was a bit thin on the ground though. I would like to bring it to Council's attention that, although they were removed last year, the Faculty Union Presidents are once again full voting members of RWB. This is due to the fact that the new constitution which was passed at the final council meeting of last year had not removed them from the list of voting members and now overrides all previous amendments. So please turn up (this applies to you Tris and Tim)!

RWB discussed several issues from NSS Results, Campaign Teams, Campaign Budgets and Higher Education Funding (See we get all the fun!). More about Higher Education Funding below:

Higher Education Funding

Ok so we suspended policy at the last meeting of Council pending a 'full review'. Wasn't that exciting? Well at least we managed to spark some debate in Felix. Now what?

At RWB the following methods of gathering student opinion were discussed:

- Lunchtime Stalls
- 'Huge' Online Survey
- Panel debate around the wider issue of 'What is the cost of Higher Education?' to include key speakers. It would be great if we could get the Rector involved and his successor Roy Anderson

To make this appeal to people rather than just be another pointless survey we need to find a clever way of marketing it and engaging our audience (Err... I sound like the NUS!) All ideas are welcome. Steve and I will be moving forward with this over the next month and welcome as much support as possible. Our initial target is to reach 25% of all home and EU students. This may rise if the debate really gets going.

Fairtrade University Status

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As I mentioned at the top of my report, writing this is currently distracting me from doing other stuff, such as filling in the Fairtrade University Application. This will be finished by Council (I promise) and if it is not I am sure the punishment from College Commercial Services will be far more severe than anything this committee can deal out!

With this promise in mind, if anybody is interested in seeing the completed application form please see me at the end of Council when I should be able to show you a hard copy. If you would prefer to have your own copy and save the environment please email me for an electronic copy.

Commemoration Day

I had a great day on Wednesday in the Albert Hall watching this years finalists graduate. I managed to walk in heels, a dress and a mortar board without falling over or dropping said mortar board. This is a significant personal achievement. I also managed to remember to wear black when playing with a certain motorised mascot while not entirely appropriately attired and therefore can hide the resulting grease stains.

Congratulations to Steve and Ally on your graduation! (Even though Steve forgot that Chris and I were there too!)

Felix

The Welfare Section of Felix has had a steady stream of articles since the start of term. Articles so far have covered Private Housing, Registering with a Doctor, Vaccinations, Home Sickness, Equal Opportunities and much more. Many thanks must go to David Hayton, Nigel Cooke and Tom Roberts for all the hard work they have put in to ensuring welfare issues are being discussed in our student media.

Challenge the Sabbs!

The first 'Challenge the Sabbs' appeared in this weeks Felix with the Sabbs competing against Islamic Society to see who could stomach the Hottest Chilli Pepper. Thanks to my team mates, Ally, Tomo and Jov for not making too much fun of me for bottling out after only one and a half chillies and congratulations to Ally for being the only Sabb to actually beat his opponent! GO TEAM SABB! =D

KMP 26/10/2007