

## Graduate Students' Union (GSU) Report

The new GSU executive committee (GEC) started their roles in August 2013. The current GEC members are:

GSU President – Andreas Thomik  
GSU Deputy President (Operations) – Oliver (Ollie) Dean  
GSU Deputy President (Representation) – Boshuo Guo  
GSU Secretary – Qize Ding  
GSU Treasurer – Gheorghe-Teodor Bercea  
GSU Marketing and Publicity Officer – Marily Nika  
GSU Events Officers – Natalie Andrews, Rahul Kumar, Peter Lai, Maria Nelson, Xuchang Zheng  
GSU AWO (Academic & Welfare Officer) Medicine – Nuha Yassin  
GSU Physical Sciences – Max Boleininiger  
GSU AWO Engineering – Mohammed Hassan Ahmadzadeh  
GSU AWO Business School – Ruxandra Luca  
GSU AWO Life Sciences – Marta Sawicka

The goal of the GSU this year is to increase its visibility among the postgraduate (PG) population, strengthen the PG community by creating links across departments and becoming a key player in all decisions regarding PG life at Imperial College.

The GEC has had 2 meetings (15<sup>th</sup> August, 19<sup>th</sup> September). Main discussion topics have been organisation of events which have taken place already or are taking place in the near future and discussion around the “cohort building” concept introduced by the Graduate School (GS) for new PhD students this year, alongside with administrative matters. Events and cohort building are further detailed below.

Unless otherwise specified, multiple members of the GSU were involved in all activities.

### Events

#### HSC/GSU Boat Party

Following up on last year's success, the Hammersmith Student Community (HSC) organised again a boat party for PG students. The event was scheduled for the Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September on the *Mercia* for a 4h cruise on the Thames with music and food. Tickets were sold for 28£ and included a free welcome drink and a free buffet.

The GSU financed the event and actively participated in advertising it among the PG community.

After an initial scare regarding low sales and a strong marketing campaign including, but not limited to, posters on Imperial College campuses, emails to PG students and advertisement on the Facebook page, the event sold out around noon on Wednesday, which leaves the GSU with a slight net gain.

#### PG Welcome Day

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October, Andreas Thomik gave a short speech to the various groups of new PG students starting their year as MSc/MRes or PhD at Imperial College. At the following welcome reception, Boshuo Guo and Ollie Dean were present to welcome the new students and have an informal chat about life at Imperial College.

### Freshers' Fair

Organisation of a stall for the freshers' fair included getting a new banner with the updated GSU logo (the GSU used to be called Graduate Students' Association (GSA) until last year), t-shirts for all members of the GSU and flyers advertising upcoming events.

Additionally, the location of the GSU stand was changed to be next to the one of the Union in the Beit Quadrangle.

Multiple members of the GEC

### London Tours

As a first this year, the GSU is organising a free<sup>1</sup> tourist tour of London on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October under the initiative of Ollie Dean. Tours will be guided by members of the GSU. A trial run on the 28<sup>th</sup> September was very successful. The tour is scheduled to start at 11 am and end at Imperial College at 3 pm, thus leaving participants plenty of time to be ready for the PG Mingle on the night.

### PG Mingle

As another first, the GSU will this year be present at the PG Mingle on the night of the 5<sup>th</sup> October. This is to welcome the new PG students and organise a few ice-breaking events.

### Wicked Musical

Heavily discounted tickets for Wicked were ordered and will be on sale imminently for a viewing on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November.

### Pub Quiz

The very popular pub quiz run by Maria Parkes has been rebranded to run under GSU logo. As Maria is coming to an end of her PhD and will unfortunately no longer be able to run the pub quiz after the end of this year, it was decided that the GSU would absorb it into its programme of events.

### Cohort Building

The GS introduced this year, on direction of the college, the concept of *cohort building*, in which new PhD students are automatically assigned to a group (termed cohort) of new students from within their department. These cohorts are supposed to perform a number of activities together to reinforce peer support and avoid isolation of new students.

While the general feeling within the GEC was that this is a good idea, a number of points were raised regarding their implementation. A report with various comments, questions and recommendations is currently under preparation to be presented to the GS by mid-October.

### Role-specific activities

All members of the GEC have specific roles to play within the College and Union. These are mainly attending various committees (President, Deputy President (Representation) and AWOs), liaising with key people in College and the Union (President and Deputy Presidents) and being in contact with the departmental representatives (AWOs).

Regarding this:

- All committees to date have successfully been attended by the relevant members of the GSU. Attendance to upcoming committees was distributed among the AWOs by Boshuo Guo.

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<sup>1</sup> The only cost incurred by participants is the cost of taking the buses on some parts of the trip. However, the spend is capped automatically if travelling with an Oyster card.

- Key contacts have been established with the administration of Imperial College, the Graduate School and the Union.
- New reps will be met shortly after they have been elected a few weeks from the date of this report.

Additionally, all members of the GEC attended any training courses and networking events to which they were invited.