

12 January 2016

Report to Union Council

Chun-Yin San, Deputy President (Education)

Academic Representation Network

- As part of the Imperial Plus Ceremony in December, I gave a presentation and talk highlighting the successes of Reps and the Rep Network over the Autumn term. (The slides are included as an appendix item) I am deeply appreciative for all the time and effort that the students have taken to volunteer for the positions, and look forward to seeing what we can accomplish over the Spring term
- I am currently discussing with the Exec Education arm of the Business School to organize a leadership development workshop for Reps towards the start of February



Academic Affairs

- The NSS Response was published towards the end of Autumn term, and since then we have received very positive responses from various bodies of staff
 - The report resonated strongly with the Vice-Provost (Education) and at the Vice-Provost Advisory Group for Education. It has inspired constructive conversation about whether teaching methods at Imperial are 'authentic' in assessing and building student ability, and how curriculum designs could be altered to better support student welfare and skills development following the work coming out of Academic Standards Framework. I continue to be heavily involved in the ongoing discussions on these topics
 - The Provost has given indications of strong support and commitment to addressing feedback issues. Lucinda and I will be presenting the NSS Response to Provost Board this month – a first, and I look forward to hearing the formal views of the Deans
 - The Education Office is preparing a formal response to the NSS Response; we have also reached a preliminary agreement to synchronize our response timeline with the College's – i.e. we should expect a formal response and action plans to future NSS Responses
 - At the Engineering Faculty Teaching Committee, Department staff resonated strongly with the principles of having deadlines for feedback from staff, to having authentic modes of assessment, to protect student mental health, and to get students to be more reflective and creative
 - Natural Sciences have been very proactive in response to our NSS Response and have committed to dedicating 'most of the agenda' to NSS recommendations in their upcoming Undergraduate Faculty Teaching Sub-Committee
- The PRES Response was completed at the same time as the NSS Response, but we have deferred publication to later this month for marketing needs. Our PGR experience recommendations have been equally well-received by College staff
 - The Dean of the Business School gave strong support to the report and stated that the Business School will consider the recommendations very seriously in support of its fledging PhD programs
 - Our recommendations inspired a strong push by members of VPAGE for stronger measures against failing research supervisors; poor research supervision will most likely become the focal point to a joint education-welfare campaign this term
 - I am looking to build stronger relationships with research staff in the College in support of our representation of PGR students. So far this has involved meeting with Faculty Vice-Deans (Research) and I look to work constructively with the Vice-Provost (Research) – a first

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Learning Environment

- There are significant reliability issues affecting Blackboard that are likely to last until the end of the academic year, according to a member of ICT staff. I have alerted all the UG Rep teams to be vigilant about this, and will continue to follow-up with the ICT Department
- I am working with Anwar, GSU AWO (Medicine), and Xing Xing, GSU AWO (Life Sciences), to address issues affecting student experience at Hammersmith Hospital and Silwood Park. Progress on this remain slow as the College isn't particularly willing to commit/expand resources, so we are exploring mitigating solutions in the meantime (e.g. setting up mailing service from Student Hub to HH so students can collect relevant letters and documentation from Registry)
 - I remain concerned about the possibility of Wolfson Restaurant at Hammersmith Hospital being closed – i.e. leaving students with horrid hospital food and a mini-café – and will look to escalate this

Personal & Professional Development

- I have been supporting the Student Development team in developing the foundations to Student Volunteering Week 2016, and a possible 'Global Challenges' series of events. Both initiatives will be mostly student-led and give more students the opportunity to make a positive social impact
- The Student Development Coordinator (Volunteering) and I have met with staff responsible for Imperial Festival, to see how we can enable more students to more easily volunteer for the Festival and get recognized for their involvement
- I am currently part of the Public Engagement Work-Stream and have been working to 1) shape the values of public engagement at Imperial and 2) ensure students are recognized as key participants and stakeholders