

# Imperial College Union Council Report

## Thomas Fernandez Debets, Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)

This report has been split to show the latest progress on my manifesto points in the first half and the work undertaken/in progress relating to Covid-19 in the second. Progress on manifesto points has been very slow in the past 4 weeks but there are some good developments regarding both the College's and the Union's approach to the 2020/21 academic year given the current context.

### Goal 1 – New Sports Complex

At the time of running in the Leadership Elections 2019, Imperial College London's sports facilities were outdated and not fit for purpose.

- In 2019, £700,000 was invested in improving facilities at Harlington
- Sale on Heston consulted on with student stakeholders and set for summer 2020
- The Monday night service is being reviewed as part of the wider budgeting process the Union is undertaking.
- *No further update – major updates are unlikely given the current restrictions due to Covid-19*

### Goal 2 – Promote CSPs' activities

Our Clubs, Societies & Projects (CSPs) have great knowledge and experience within their respective fields and cater to their members' needs. Promoting their activities does not only provide them with a platform to showcase them but would also ensure the Union engages more adequately with its membership, reflecting their interests.

- ACC Night and Arts Night have been successful student-led staple events and are being included in the events calendar for next year. More CSP takeovers of the venues will be advertised and reserved in the events calendar.
- The Events group will sit under the DPFS' Services & Sustainability Board and meet by the end of the academic year to review the proposed calendar ahead of Welcome.
- The design of a social media takeover app has been paused. In the meantime, forms are now available to advertise [CSP events on screens](#) in the Union building and on the Sherfield walkway, as well as through [Instagram takeovers](#).
- *Though the response to Covid-19 has mainly been responsive so far, we are now looking at how to promote CSP activity effectively in the 'new normal'. Work is currently underway with the Events & Conference Manager to better promote all the work that is currently being done by CSPs during lockdown.*

### Goal 3 – Implement the new Athletic Union

The roll-out of the Sports Hub over the next few years is a joint project between Move Imperial and Imperial College Union that will improve students' experience within sport.

- Our partner creative agency, Borne, have gone out to the sports clubs for them to vote on their preferred design and are now finalising their product. This should be handed over in July
- Following completion of CSP Annual Budgeting, the model for the Sports Hub needs to be verified. This has been postponed during Covid-19.
- Kit tender to take place once university sport resumes through BUCS.

### Goal 4 – Improve spaces and processes

Our spaces are outdated and some of our processes need reviewing

- A CSP Volunteer Strategy has been developed by the Student Opportunities & Development Manager following consultation with a wide range of student volunteers. This is the basis for the design/remodeling of training delivery ahead of the 2020/21 academic year.
- A project looking at supporting CSPs to be more H&S compliant is underway, with an external consultant supporting project leads with the Union.
- The new annual room booking system has been rolled out and is being upgraded to include bookings for our social venues.

### Goal 5 – Better consultation and student inclusion

Despite a common aim to improve the student experience at Imperial College London whilst thriving for academic and research excellence, students have often been left out of the decision-making process

at the highest level of the Union and the College. Their inclusion, and better understanding of the different groups that constitute our membership, will lead to better tailored decision-making.

- A “Meaningful Partnership Between Senior Volunteers and the Union” document is being devised and will be shared by email once completed. This includes bringing students into the decision-making process at the Union through regular ‘town hall’ style updates from senior members of staff.
- Looking to put students at the centre of more decisions, I am working to get the Clubs, Societies & Projects Board (CSPB) involved in more decisions that affect CSPs, including those around Welcome Week and systems improvements to eActivities.
- 3000+ students have completed the Student Experience Survey. This will be the start of a wider project to utilise available data to better inform decision-making at the Union. An approach has been put forward and accepted at the Communications Committee, a sub-committee of the ICU Board of Trustees, and submitted alongside this paper for reference.

### **Covid-19 focus**

Since mid-March, a lot of my time has been spent responding to the pandemic. Though this has mainly manifested itself in operational tasks, we are now in a place where I can look forward to next steps.

- Stepped in to help with Covid-19 related mass refunds, helping DPFS through an extraordinarily large number of requests
- Communicated weekly with CSPs to ensure they are kept up-to-date with the breadth of information that is relevant to their activity
- Collected information from CSPs regarding the financial impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on their finances to put together a plan, involving available resources within the Union and with the IC Trust, to minimize the impact.
- Stream-lead for the College’s ‘Education Strategy & Operations Group – Student Experience’, I am working with the Union and various departments within the College to ensure the delivery of extra-curricular activities starting in the Autumn term that reflects the needs of the students.
- Member of the College’s ‘Welcome Week Working Group’, I am working with departments and the College’s support services to ensure the successful delivery of Welcome Week in the context of Covid-19.
- The Union is taking a more heads-on approach to reviewing its services in the current context. Services and events shouldn’t be transposed online if they don’t align with reviewed aims & objectives. A team has been pulled together to look at ensuring this is adhered to and mainly comprises of Officer Trustees and managers.
- Student Opportunities & Development are looking at guidance for CSPs’ to build online communities.

### **Other**

In this section, other items are succinctly mentioned:

- Involved in the Student Choice Awards working group and on panels for Colours/OSA/Fellowship, Outstanding CSP and Outstanding Enterprise.
- Reviewing ICU budgets for 2020/21, taking a scenario-based approach to the process.
- The first DoCSoc project (led by Teymor Buckley) to design a system beneficial to ICU is underway and could set the way for more student involvement in systems improvement in the future.
- Work in shaping Welcome 2020
- Reviewing the work of the Student Opportunities & Development team given the newly appointed manager