

Imperial College Union

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A Report by John Collins, IC Union President

College Meetings

Aside from various Union and informal College meetings, the only formal College meeting I have attended in the last three weeks is the College's Senate. The most important issue discussed at this meeting was the Bologna Agreement, and in particular the impact it could have on student workload when the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is introduced. Ben and I plan to meet with Mary Ritter (the Pro Rector who is leading the College's response to Bologna) soon to discuss this matter.

Wye's future

Jay Khaneka (WCUS President) and I led a delegation from ICU to the University of Kent (UKC) Union in Canterbury to discuss transitional arrangements with the Kent Union when undergraduate teaching at Wye is transferred from Imperial College to UKC in 2007. The College's transfer arrangements are complex and in some places vague; it looks like Imperial College will continue to manage accommodation, catering, estates, IT and the library services whilst UKC will be responsible for teaching. Jay and I will be working closely with Mike Haw (Kent Union President) to find an arrangement that allows WCUS to serve both Imperial and UKC students over the next five years.

Union Centenary Projects

The student stream of the College's Centenary Programme is meeting regularly and communication with the College has improved over recent weeks. The ball sponsorship discussions are looking promising and we have at least one guest speaker confirmed (we could do with another though).

I met with the Office of Alumni Development and we agreed to pursue three fundraising initiatives (in addition to the Beit Masterplan fundraising project, which is now underway).

1. Corporate sponsorship of the Beit Building (I admit that I have made limited progress on this so far)
2. Lottery Grants for the Beit Project (see "Beit Building Update")
3. Club sponsorship: raising money for individual club centenary projects by publicising them in an insert that will sent to 96,000 alumni with the January edition of "Imperial Matters".

Shiv Chopra (Deputy President for Medics and the Centenary) is publicising our third initiative through the CSCs now. If you are a CSC Chair then please encourage your clubs to respond to his emails; this is your clubs' chance to get publicity to nearly 100,000 alumni for free.

Building Update

We have conducted a lot of research in to Lottery Grants lately and it appears that we may be eligible for Arts Council, Heritage and Big Lottery fund grants. Once we have acquired detailed cost breakdowns from our Cost Consultant we should be in a position to formally submit several applications.

Meanwhile, the Central Core project is back on schedule (and due for completion this March) and in budget. The furniture and new booths for Da Vinci's should arrive before Christmas, which is later than I would have liked.

Governance Review

I have met with several officers and College staff to seek advice on and support for the phase I proposals that are being presented to this Council meeting. Please see further papers for information.

Elections

Please see my Returning Officer's report for details about recent Council elections and my Executive report for details about recent Executive elections.

Commemoration Day

I spoke at both Commemoration Day ceremonies, which is even more daunting than it sounds, and I was delighted to see the bar so busy that evening. I acknowledge that the South Kensington bars were somewhat understaffed on the evening of Commemoration Day and lessons have been learnt for next year.

Fees Demonstration

Ben and I joined the Imperial delegation to the recent Top Up Fees demonstration, which was attended by around 8,000 students from across the UK. Although Imperial's delegation was small (around a dozen), it compared favourably with most other London institutions.

Now that the debate is moving on, I think that it is time for ICU to reconsider its current policy on higher education funding.

JC 11/11/09