

Imperial College Union

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A note by Jenny Morgan

Union Building Redevelopment

In 2005 the Union undertook a feasibility study, funded by Imperial College for the redevelopment of the Union. Construction costs for the project were estimated at £6.5m. Following the studies completion and publication of the report Imperial College agreed to fund two thirds of the cost of a first construction phase. (Three construction phases in total.) Last year the first phase was completed.

During 2007/08 funds were made available by Imperial College, Harlington Trust and Imperial College Trust to allow the second phase of the Beit redevelopment to start in September 2008. Works have now started and during this phase we shall see:

Construction of a mezzanine floor in the old gymnasium for a new, enlarged Student Activity Centre, Advice Centre and offices for membership services staff.

Construction of a new activity/dance centre on the 3rd floor with integral lavatories and stores.

Fitting out of the changing rooms and disabled lavatory shells in the central core on the 2nd mezzanine and 3rd floors.

Construction of new meeting rooms in the East Basement.

It is anticipated that the second phase will be completed in May 2009, and so far all is on time.

Elections

Nominations are now open for Ordinary Members of Council. These Councillors are elected proportionately from the undergraduate and postgraduate Faculty constituencies and there is 1 'non faculty' member. Although these councillors are elected by faculty, they sit on council without a mandate, representing all full members of the Union. Two Student Trustees are also being elected at this time. These representatives sit on the Union Trustee Board is the governing body of the Union. Trustee Board meets roughly six times per year to ensure that the Union is being run well and it does this by scrutinising the work of the Council and the Executive Committee.

Nominations for all these positions are open now and close on the 19th October at 23.59. You can stand by going to imperialcollegeunion.org/vote and you will need to get the required number of seconders who are full members of the union and can second you by logging on at the same web address.

Voting opens on the 31st October at 00.01 and closes on the 4th November at 23.59.

Elections are also open for GSA positions including Chair, Secretary, Activities Coordinator, Postscript Editor and Treasurer. And elections are also open for the Faculty Unions.

We will also be trialling an online hustings! Whereby questions for all the candidates can be submitted via email to elections@imperial.ac.uk these will then be uploaded on the union website and emailed to the candidates. The candidates will then have two days to respond and email their answers to elections@imperial.ac.uk where they will be uploaded for all to view before and whilst voting is open.

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RCA and RCM

I am currently working with the Presidents from the RCA and RCM (and Lord Robert Winston) to get us working collaboratively.

Cosmetic enhancement of the Bars!

Some of you may well have noticed that the bars downstairs have had some work done to make them look more pretty. They are set to be completely renovated during phase 3 but as that is at least a year away and we thought we ought to give them some attention. Robin Pitt has been absolutely amazing and spent two of his weekends sorting it all out for us. You will notice new paint, wallpaper (the black swish has come from Holland!), new DJ booth cladding, new bar bits, new lights, new sofas, new furniture and so on! I think this will all help to make us more commercially competitive considering our location.

SCR opening times

I have negotiated with Paddy Jackman and Jane Neary to trial extended opening hours in the SCR. PGs can now get hot lunch until 3! I hope this will ease congestion and allow us to renegotiate allowing Masters students in there in due course.

Celebrating and communicating beliefs and cultures from around the World

I have been having initial discussion with Rector (his idea) about having a day, or afternoon and evening event with guest speakers representing different cultures and religious beliefs in a day of understanding and celebration. I am in process of setting up a working group for this so if you're interested please let me know – I intend to get a lot of you on board especially from our international and religious societies. We hope to involve the Mayor of London's Office and exciting people like that. (And the best news is the Rector will sort out the funding so all we need is brilliant ideas and organisational skill!)

Aldwych Group

Once a month, Sabbaticals from the Unions of the Russel Group Institutions meet up and talk about best practise and it also gives press releases representing the united views of those Unions on relevant Topics, e.g. Funding. Hannah and I chugged our way up to Edinburgh for the last 07/08 meeting and then down to Bristol for the first 08/09 meeting. I will be going to Oxford next week for the next where we'll be talking specifically about widening participation.

NUS

We've had a number of enquiries at the Union Reception asking where they can an NUS discount card from so we've been explaining that we're not actually affiliated to them but that they can use their Imperial ID to get a student discount.

Finance

We've had the Auditor in and our Financial Statements for last year are now complete with no big problems. There are some suggested areas where we might improve which the Head of Finance has welcomed and she will be working to incorporate those changes.

College Council

I sit on College Council and we had an away day to Hammersmith Hospital to see the newly built laboratories which they are sharing half and half with GSK. We were also given a presentation on changes to the Corporate Manslaughter Legislation. More information is available at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/corporatemanslaughter2007.htm> and

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http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070019_en_. In short changes have been made so now all levels of an organisation can be liable and not just those at the top.

Silwood and Wye

We will be visiting both of these campuses in the next couple of weeks to welcome those who are new to Silwood and to ensure those continuing students at Wye are coping sufficiently well with the close of the campus.

Shop Rebrand

You may have noticed that the Union Shop on the Sherfield Walkway still has the ancient ICU logos. New designs have been drawn up and these shall be in place shortly displaying the new logo.

Commemoration Day

Those that completed their degree in the Summer 08 will be graduating on October 22. The President has always read an oratory at the beginning of the ceremony. This speech has been the same for at least 50 years. I have got permission to rewrite it as currently it is a prayer (which is not inclusive for all our members) and also it is just terribly outdated.

Thank you!

I just wanted to take this opportunity to give an enormous shout out to some rather brilliant people – my sabbatical team.

Lily has lived, breathed and slept freshers' fair and after party. My goodness did it pay off. That was the biggest freshers' fair in the UK ever and all the freshers and returning students had a great time. She's also made the club officers' handbook which is just brilliant and not to mention worked enormously hard for all the clubs!

Christian has been working all hours possible and has been a huge help to me and many a club chair and treasurer.

Hannah has shown such professionalism with dealing with a huge amount of problems of students and college and has really made an enormous difference to the students on the ground already.

Mark is so dedicated to the medical school and has dealt incredibly well with recent incidents as well as pull off a hugely successful affirmation ceremony even though he had to battle a large number of last minute changes!

And Jov. Jov is amazing and is a very supportive member of the team as well as managing Felix very well. The Freshers handbook was also excellent.

The Union staff have also been brilliant, in particular Robin, Phil, Becca, Alex, Malcolm and Chiley so many thanks to all of them as well.