

Deputy President (Education and Welfare) Council Report

A note by the DPEW Hannah Theodorou

Advice Center

The Student Adviser, Nigel, runs a service for all students in the East Wing basement of Beit Quad. We've identified that the footfall has decreased and that communication between the DPEW and Adviser has not been as effective as it could have been, particularly when they were sharing cases. We now share diaries and will have regular meetings to discuss the type of cases that are coming up so that I can bring recurrent problems to College Meetings. We have also rebranded as the Advice Center with a new range of flyers and posters.

Nightline

I have been speaking to Nightline about raising their profile at Imperial (we need to get our money's worth!). All the freshers got a flyer in their halls welcome pack and I am working with Alex to help promote them across College.

Student Portal Project

I have been to a number of meetings adding my thoughts and views to make the Student Portal, MyImperial as useful for students as possible. If you haven't logged in yet, do it now (it's the best place to find all your student admin pages)....

Registry

There are a number of things related to online admin that don't work very well because they never asked for student opinions when they started them so I have now become the consultant for ICT and registry when they want a student's advice. The catering is always good so I don't mind so much....

Disabilities

There have been recommendations made to the College concerning disabled students at Imperial. One of the things we have been falling short on is co-ordinating feedback from these students (my job!) so I have been working with the College's Disability Officer to work out how to engage with these students better and revising the disability policy (particularly in regards to disclosure). This is something I need to work on with the Union's disability portfolio holder- any takers?

Interviews

I have sat on the interview panel for 3 positions: Village Manager for South Kensington, Student Accommodation Center Manager and a subwarden interview for Holbein and Willis Jackson. We've hired some really student-oriented individuals who are really keen to get student feedback on halls of residences.

NUS/ Aldwych/ Training

I have been showing my face at various external events, networking to full effect whilst dressed as an American Indian. These included the NUS Higher Education Funding Debate and Quality Training (the latter was actually rather useful). We also went to Aldwych handover, ULU training, and another Aldwych meeting.

Prayer Room

The prayer room has seen a large increase in users over the summer period and this trend is expected to continue as greater numbers of International students attend the College. I have been working with the Islamic Society and College to negotiate extra space in the basement of the adjacent building which is currently used for storage.

Case work

There has been a steady stream of cases flooding through my door, with most of them being appeals against academic decisions. Students seem to feel shy about approaching their Personal Tutor or department, even when there are quite serious personal issues interfering

with their academic performance. I am working with College to review the training and advice Personal Tutor's receive (I think it's pretty woeful...).

Paragon Hall Students

As some of you will know, there was a considerable shortage of accommodation this year with 170 students who were guaranteed accommodation not having a room. Through lots of re-shuffling and changing cupboards into bedrooms etc they managed to squeeze them all in. There was one unfortunate group who ended up in Brentford and I have been working to make sure they feel included and have been co-ordinating their relocation to other College accommodation to fill spaces left by no-shows.

Halls

This year I'm really keen to engage with students during their time in halls, getting them involved in campaigns and also feeding back information to them about exams and support services. To facilitate this all the Halls Seniors were brought together for a brief overview of what the College and Union has to offer so that if they were asked they know which direction to point them in. I also produced a poster entitled 'Who's here to Help' for all the halls which will be going up this week outlining the Student Support Services.

Eastside Project

The Eastside building is rapidly progressing, with some parts quite ahead of schedule. It's really important that it stays that way otherwise we'll be anticipating a shortage of over 400 beds next October....

Campaigns

The dates for this year's planned campaigns so far are:

Healthy Living Week (3-7th November)

SHAG Week (24-28th November)

Beat the Blues (26-30th January)

Green Week (9-13th February)

Healthy Living Week planning is well under way, with Sport Imperial and Lily planning loads of sporting-related tastings and showcases, with myself helping out on the health and food-focussed parts with the Health Centre and College and Union Catering.

SHAG week will be discussed at RWB this Thursday, but we are recruiting SHAG ambassadors now to help throughout the week handing out condoms and other sexual health advice leaflets plus organising a few events if they wanted.

Representation

I am working on reshuffling representation for postgraduate students so they are represented through the Graduate School Association rather than the Faculty Unions where they were being represented by undergraduates who had little understanding of postgraduate issues such as funding or supervision. The paper is going to RWB on Thursday and will be put to the next Council on the 3rd of November. I am also working on strengthening the Representation Network and using the reps in all the faculties to effectively filter information up and down to the Union so the students' views are represented at College Committees. This will include training and a handbook.