

Imperial College Union
President's Report
A note by Ashley Brown

External Relations

At the start of the month, student officers from USU came to Imperial to discuss shared summer training – it looks we'll have much better training in finance, trustee responsibilities and leadership this year, for a minimal extra cost as we are sharing resources.

At the last meeting of College Council there was an interest in the total cost of studying at Imperial for a degree. I feel it is important to feed back to them on this issue, so we'll be randomly selecting some students to interview about their total cost of living (including accommodation, debts, how much part-time work they need to do). This will also form part of our submission to the second call of Lord Browne's review into higher education funding.

Sabbatical Elections

By the time of the meeting voting will have closed and we might even have resolved any complaints. At the time of writing voting has been open for over ~~36~~ 40 hours with ~~5,321~~ 7,240 votes by ~~1,012~~ 1,354 people. The 'live' voting stats seemed to reduce productivity across the College, and also made it hard to write this bit as the number kept changing.

Good luck to all the candidates.

While the DPFS and DPW were dealing with the returning officer side of elections, I was assisting with some of the publicity material. We wanted a more 'fun' design this year and it seems to have achieved the goal of increasing the different backgrounds of the candidates.

Commercial Services

After a bit of controversy, 'Metric' emerged as the clear winner in the club naming competition. The shortlist for the bar names seemed to upset a lot of people, and the long list submitted by the students was pretty poor compared to the good suggestions for the club. After a lot of complaints (more than the 50 people posting on the blog that Felix implied – I actually spoke to people in the bar, around College and received emails as well), we decided that we might get a better long-list if we tried again. There might be some suggestions from 'professionals' too.

So, the club will be 'Metric', the bar is yet to be named.

We have a solution to the pillar problem, which involves jacking up the building, putting in a set of steels like a 'goal-post', taking the pillar out, then dropping the building back down again. It looks like we'll have to put some new piles in as the foundations of the building were designed for two storeys in 1910, from the 1960s they had to take four and on the nightclub side of the building they now have five with the new mezzanine. By removing the pillar we'll be transferring the load from the middle to the sides.

Service Level Agreements/Constitutional Changes

I've started to make better progress on these, but they will come to the April Council instead. In particular, we've looked at:

- **Sports Partnership** – This governs our arrangement with Sport Imperial, and was originally created three years ago and agreed by the Executive Committee. We have revised it to clarify which clubs should come under the agreement. We have a few more revisions to make, then it will be brought to Council.
- **Space Agreement** – Quite a lot has changed since the space agreement was signed, and I've asked the Faculty Unions and RSM to update their respective areas. Thanks to RSM and

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ICSMSU for replying. Guilds and RCSU are yet to respond. Once I've had responses from any groups who have space listed in the agreement, it can be brought to Council.

- **Estates SLA** – This isn't quite as bad as it first looked, it just needs some web addresses and contact names changing, so that's a job for a free minute some time.
- **Finance SLA** – We still haven't got a formal agreement regarding the relationship between ICU and College Finance, but we will have that finalised by the next meeting.

The elections have highlighted some ambiguities with the election regulations which we might want to tighten up, so those will also come to the next Council along with constitutional tidying up.

Student-led Projects

There are many groups of students who run student-led volunteering projects, frequently to assist in developing countries. We currently offer them little to no support unless they become a club, which they cannot do unless they have 20 people. There are also groups who feel that the paperwork required with becoming a club outweighs any support we might give. However, these projects carry considerable risk and having them exist outside a formal structure is beginning to cause concern in the College. We should also be assisting *all* of our students to take part in the activities they want, not just those who want to join existing clubs and societies.

I've spent quite a lot of time since the last meeting trying to find a solution. What we have come up with is a proposed partnership with the Outreach Office in College, where we would take these projects on, probably under CAG, but have a member of administrative staff shared between Outreach (Imperial Volunteer Centre) and ICU. One of the key reasons we have so many barriers to starting new clubs and societies is that we have reached the limit of our administrative capability - 300 is about as many as we can cope with. A shared member of staff will allow us to assist students on these projects but with a reduced cost to us, while also increasing our ability to cope with the administration clubs require.

Planning Round

The College planning round has begun. We put our submission in on March 5th. Our subvention comes from the central services pot, which the faculties would quite like to see reduced this year so they have more money to spend on academic matters. However, the student-led project plan above would also decrease the burden on the faculties for some of these projects, in terms of administration, as well as reducing duplication across the College. Hopefully the idea will be supported in planning. It'll be good for the faculties, good for students and good for ICU.

Minibuses

Please stop bumping them into things. You wait ages for a minibus incident then 3 come along at once... Nothing serious, but it's quite annoying when a brand new bus gets intimate with a bollard.