

ICU Council Chair's Report

A note by Jenny Wilson

Since the last meeting there have been two successful meetings (please read on), held on the 23rd May and the 13th June respectively.

Membership

At this time of the year, attendance from some Ordinary Members (and other officers) tends to become erratic for a range of reasons, resulting in the automatic resignation of some OM's. However, the total membership of the Council as of the final meeting stood at 40 members.

May 23rd Meeting

In this meeting we started by ratifying the votes of the previous scheduled Council, which had been done by email. Following this, there were the usual Sabbatical reports, as well as the Felix Editor's report (the result of a previous mandate to bring a report to every Council). Additionally we had two reports from Sabbaticals (DPFS & DPE) and two Management Group reports (ICSM & GSA) that had missed the deadline of the previous meeting. The most contentious point was that of asking about ticket sales for the summer ball, but this was withheld, being reported as commercially sensitive.

Excitingly in this meeting, we approved the Executive Committee's nominations for members of the Union Court, giving it almost a full compliment apart from the staff member (see later) and one student member (of any faculty).

The other agenda item was that of the Publicity Policy, brought by the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), which detailed much needed amendments to the now outdated Poster Policy. Importantly, it included greater clarification on electronic mediums of publicity. This passed unanimously. The Council also reviewed the External Speakers Policy for information, that was passed in the last Trustee Board meeting as a Trustee Board reserved policy.

A discussion on the proposals of to change the College's working day was brought to AOB by the Deputy President (Education), which was informative and fruitful.

June 13th Meeting

Despite being the last meeting of the year, this meeting had some important policies and other traditional agenda items. The Sabbatical and Felix Editor reports were received first, followed by the Deputy President (Welfare)'s report on the illuminating Welfare Survey. Following this, we approved the updated Standing Orders of the RCC and the OSC, while the SCC should have theirs pending for early next year. We then renewed the Higher Education Funding Policy to reflect recent advances, such as the creation of the Scholarships Campaign Board, and the commitment to surveying recipients of financial aid in the future to ensure its being targeted in the best way possible.

The Journal Pricing Policy which was passed is a new policy for the Union which voices the Union's support for the College Library in obtaining necessary Journals when the two largest suppliers' prices are spiralling upwards. It's pleasing to see the Union taking a proactive role on such a topic. Living out requests were received and approved from the DPFS (elect) and Felix Editor (elect). Before reviewing the recommendations of the Colours Committee we passed an amendment to the Union

Awards Policy, specifying that the new President's Award for Representation should go to both an UG and PG department, though this outcome meant that the choice of recipients wasn't affected. I had to stand down as Chair of the meeting (and handed this over to the President) for the approval of the nominations for Colours Awards, due to a conflict of interest, but these were passed unanimously. At this point the meeting moved on to consider whether to confer Honorary Life Membership to each member of the sabbatical team. Six were conferred, out of the seven nominations following the same procedure that has been practised for, I'm led to believe, at least the past 15 years. However, this decision by the Council was appealed to the Union Court by the President, resulting in the decision being quashed.

Emergency meetings of the Council

As instructed by the ICU Court ruling (11/05), an Emergency Council was attempted on Thursday 16th June at 12.30pm, but which only achieved 18 attendees and thus was deemed not quorate and didn't go ahead. This was then retried on Wednesday 22nd June for which we required everyone to RSVP with attendance prior to the meeting. This also did not have enough positive replies, and so was pre-emptively cancelled. Finally we tried a 'Doodle poll' to try to see when Councillors would be free in the final week of term offering 6 different times but failed to have enough people available for any of the options and thus these also didn't occur. As a result the Court ordered that the matter of considering whether to confer Honorary Life Membership on each member of the sabbatical team should be on the agenda for the first meeting of the Council with a full membership (including OM's) in the new academic year. Many thanks to Becca Coxhead for all of her assistance in this issue.

Other

In light of the almost full Union Court membership, I reflected that out of the three *ex officio* members of the Trustee Board, I am the only student. With this in mind, I have contacted a member of staff for the staff position on the Union Court. So far he has shown interest, but is reserving commitment until after the duty reallocations have taken place in the Life Sciences department. If he decides he would not be able to fill the post, the Union President (elect) has another candidate in mind. I am also aware of a student who is keen to stand for the final student position. Ultimately we are aiming to have the final two places filled at the first Council of the new academic year.

I also chaired a highly unorthodox disciplinary hearing, with regard to a complaint between members of the Gaelic Athletics Club. In this situation it appeared that a group of alumni (and Union Life members) had led a coup against the current President of the club in an undemocratic and defamatory fashion. The club President requested only that his name be cleared in the club, to which they agreed. Their apology required several drafts, but we believe the matter to be resolved now. Notably, the panel decided that this instance may be taken into account in any future cases of misconduct by the individuals or the club. Many thanks to David Smith, Aislinn O'Malley, Stuart Haylock and Nathaniel Bottrell for rising to the challenge of being the panel, particularly as the invitation had to be extended to members of the Council, and not just Exec.