

Imperial College Union  
President's Report  
*A Note by the President*

**Life Sciences**

At the last Council meeting we passed the paper to Imperial College Senate about halting the Life Sciences restructure until after the teaching review, pointing out the many concerns students and staff had about the restructure. The paper went to Senate two days later on 15 December. After several statements in support of the paper from various members of the committee the Rector (who was chairing Senate) asked for a show of hands of those who were concerned about the restructure. By this point it was obvious what was happening, as College Management had effectively closed all debate and were visibly aggressive. Nevertheless, 7 hands were shown, and I would like to thank Margaret Cunningham, Thomas Pike, Krystia Broda, Tim Albrecht and Michael McGarvey for being the staff members who stood up against the management. Throughout the whole discussion we could hear the chanting going on from the protest outside. The curtains were shut on the side where the protesters were, which is indictment enough of their disrespect for what students and staff felt.

From now on we can do the following:

1. Keep pressuring the department to release a plan detailing how teaching time will be filled.
2. Take part in the Teaching Review which has already started and update students as to how this is progressing and how they can get involved.
3. When the final year module choices are released in April/May, these will indicate what changes there will be to the final year Biology and Biochemistry courses. If there are significant changes then the whole guarantee behind the restructure is untrue (that there will be no changes to course breadth). Should this be the case College Council will have been lied to.
4. Continue to support PhD students as they seek reassurance that they can continue their projects at Imperial.
5. Continue to support Masters Students with the reduced number of project options and to ascertain as quickly as possible whether all Masters Courses will be available next year.
6. Continue to spread the word about how the restructure has been handled by Imperial management. They should certainly learn that students at Imperial are not passive and will examine each change to a course as it comes about. We are not reactionary and will not oppose every change, but when we make constructive criticism we expect to be listened to.

**The Union Strategic Plan 2011-2005**

Myself and the Operations Manager met with *Red Brick*, a company who perform market based research and take Unions through strategic plans. They provided a plan of how they would carry out the research and indicated a price of approximately £30,000. After discussions with the Trustee Board on 11 January, we will be tendering out this process to other companies who perform the same service to see what they can offer instead. This process is ongoing and when we have received at least two other offers the Executive will decide on a company and the development of the Strategic Plan will begin.

### **Union Finances**

The Union financial processes are in a state where they need proper documenting, both from an accountability and legal standpoint. This is an issue which has arisen over the last year. The company *Counterculture* will be documenting all the financial procedures in the Union for £7000 and they will begin this work today (17 January). The benefit of an external company performing this task is that they have experience of documenting proper financial procedures, they can give us an external view of our finances and potentially suggest changes to processes, and it will satisfy the College.

Recruitment of a Finance Manager is also underway. After an unsuccessful attempt to recruit within Imperial (no one responded to the advert) we are now advertising externally, targeting the adverts at other charities and Students' Unions.

### **Strategic Education Committee Away Day**

Myself and the Deputy President (Education) went to the Strategic Education Committee away day on January 7. The discussions for the day were about fees and access, with particular emphasis on the Key Information Statistics (KIS) which College will have to provide in its prospectus from now on. We took part in discussions on why students choose to come to Imperial and why they stay. Some of the KIS which College will have to provide in the future was about the Students' Union and so we talked for a while about the various Union statistics, which surprised many members of the Committee (it still amazes me how little senior members of staff know about the Union). We also discussed where Imperial should target its future recruiting effort to target students that it is otherwise missing, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### **Metric Promotion**

The Ents Manager and myself met with View London, a company whose website is used to sell tickets to events in London, about selling Metric tickets to other students. Metric would have its own page and tickets could be more expensive for students outside Imperial to help subsidise our students. We also hope to increase the reputation of Metric and attract a wider audience. This also has potential to increase the number of students at the Summer Ball, and may allow us to eventually rent Metric out to externals during the Summer and Easter holidays when there aren't usually events on.

### **Sabbatical Elections 2011**

We have begun to have meetings about the upcoming Sabbatical Elections, which begin soon! Advertising will begin in the next few weeks and this year we will hopefully increase the number of votes cast by having a specific campaign to get students to vote, pointing out to them the work the Sabbaticals do and the importance of choosing the right candidates. We will also have better hustings.

If you have any ideas to make the election better please get in touch, The Returning Officer will be Heather Jones.