

Request to discuss the current state of the Translation Studies Unit

Paper provided to the Union Council by Emmanouela Patiniotaki,
Representative of the former Humanities Department in the Imperial College Union

Last Union Meeting

12/02/2013

Resolve 1 – Imperial College Union resolve to reject the current approach of Imperial College London to the closure of TSU and supports the student-run campaign against it.

Resolve 2 – Imperial College Union request that, regardless of the outcome of the current consultation, Imperial College London provide reasoning for the unit's potential closure and detail on measures that College will put in place to support and re-accommodate students affected by the outcome.

TSU: Actions - Response

- The Head of the Unit provided alternative plans in order to restructure the Unit and make it "fit" solving the one and only problem we were informed that caused the Management Board's (MB) decision to shut the Unit down or transfer it elsewhere.

---No reply specific to the report.

- The students provided a report asking formally for information about the reasons that caused this. We also expressed a number of concerns regarding the way students would be treated and how this is going to affect us.

---No reply specific to the report.

- In that report, as well as through the Union (as we suppose they are informed about the decisions taken), the MB and Prof. Humphris were aware that the Council requests information too.

---No reply as far as we now, no info from the Union on that.

The two pieces of information received by the MB and Prof. Humphris as communicated to the students are the following:

"We have now heard from Management and I have been asked to circulate this statement of the facts and actions agreed by Management Board, which is part of their process to be clear about their obligations to students, and not an issue of quality:

.....

The Management Board met on 22nd February and reviewed the feedback gathered from staff, students and external interested parties on the future of the Translation Studies Unit (TSU). The Board decided that new research activities in TSU would not continue but reaffirmed the commitment to existing students. The Board agreed to commission an external adviser to review the current portfolio of PhD research and to recommend how individual students and their studies may be best supported to conclusion. It is envisaged that the

Council
30 April 2013

recommendations from this PhD review would be reported to the June meeting of the Management Board. During the period between February and June further information and options for the other activities carried out by TSU would be gathered and also considered by Management Board at the June meeting. It was agreed that no decisions on the future of TSU (outside the ceasing of research activities) would be made until this further information had been considered. There would be no intake of new students at MSc or PhD pending the June review.

Professor Humphries will now be arranging meetings with staff and students to discuss how we will gather information during the next few months. Further individual staff consultation will be put on hold pending the review by Management Board in June.

.....
I'm sorry the decision is so inconclusive and we'll make sure to keep you informed of any further developments.

In the meantime, many thanks indeed for all your support during this rather difficult period.

Best regards,
Jorge"

27/02/2013

"Dear translation students,

I just wanted to share an update with you on the Translation Studies Unit. As some of you may already be aware UCL and Imperial are currently exploring the possibility of Translation Studies Unit activities becoming established within UCL's Centre for Intercultural Studies. The discussions are still on going and we will keep you updated.

This doesn't affect the process for reviewing the PhD provision in the unit, outlined in Andrew George's recent email. As he mentioned our priority will be to look at every case, consulting on what is best for you and your studies. So if you are a PhD student I hope you are able to attend the meeting on Wednesday 24 April, 3.30-4.30pm, in Room 341 of the Huxley Building to find out more about this process from Andrew.

Best wishes

Debra Humphris"

10/04/2013

Conclusion

We feel confident that they will be looking into the conditions of our transferral. However, we still need information and a background as to why this is happening and we believe that we are completely entitled to that as students of Imperial. What is more, we would like to inform the Union that some of us will be looking for compensation in the form of time or money for the 4-5 months we lost this year while attempting to focus in an uncertain environment, while some might even sue the College.

We are asking for the Council's help to get an answer that will be fair to us and we also request to be informed as to what their obligations are towards the Union and the Council in cases like this.