

Central Rep Team Meeting (UG AAOs)

Held on Wednesday September 23, 2015

Union Office, Beit Quadrangle

Present: Saloni Dattani (SD), Chun-Yin San (CYS), Parikshat Singh (PS) and Rachel Shuttleworth (RS)

Minutes taken by SD

DPE Report: What's been happening so far

- Writing up briefings to staff (especially PG) so they know what the Union and its Rep Network does
- Better support for PG Reps
- Figuring out Welcome Packs for Year Reps
- Drawing up proposal for Imperial Horizons Rep structure
- Analyzing NSS responses
- Talking with College services to explore projects e.g. more UROPs/better UROPs with Careers Service

Rep Network

- When talking about Rep Network, talking about it in two parts: PG Taught and PG Research
- For Undergrads, focus on teams
 - e.g. Dep Reps and Year Reps work as a team; CYS and Marketing & Comms team to market them as 'Local Rep Teams' "who engage on the Department and course levels, to make their learning experience in their Department the best that it can be"
 - e.g. DPE and AOs work together as a team; CYS and Marketing & Comms team to market them as 'Central Rep Teams' "who engages on the College and Faculty levels, to effect positive change for a large body of students"
- Document being prepared to VPAGE to brief College leadership on the Rep Network

- **Proposal for rep system for Horizons Reps to be put forward to ERB**
 - Academic Officer to look after Field Reps
 - Course Liaisons under Field Reps to collect feedback
 - Election in November

College Meetings

- Team presented with a timetable of Union and College meetings for information; some didn't know what the acronyms were + what the meetings did so CYS gave explanations

- College Senate – Major issues affecting learning and teaching; College governing mechanism
- Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC) – Looking at new regulations, examination guidelines, module and year weightings
 - Some meetings e.g. Center for Doctoral Quality Committee

- Vice Provost Advisory Group for Education (VPAGE) – Talk about academic issues and student support issues
 - New V-PE start to be decided in Nov?
 - Hopefully NSS Response on Nov 16, then quality feedback in second VPAGE meeting at end of Nov
 - NSS Response may be moved to second meeting, but doesn't upset plans
 - Faculty Teaching Committees
 - Replaced by Faculty Education Committees in January
 - FoE and FoNS ones are attended by DPE and relevant AAO; FoM attended by Med (ICSMSU President)
 - Studies Committees
 - FoNS Staff-Student Committee with Dep Reps, AAO and DPE + Heads of Departments, Dean, Vice-Dean (Education)
-
- ERB – Mid Oct then at the end of each month; governing mechanism for Rep Network

Meeting Times

- Invites sent out are OK with everyone; Nov 2 might not be necessary if we meet on Nov 3 about quality feedback
- Other meetings before VPAGE so CYS can discuss any points of interest arising in VPAGE
- Meetings will include PG AWOs after October elections

NSS Response

- Previously written and sent to Reps to read but many Reps may not read this
- Changing to all Reps being given a briefing pack about NSS data for Departments, compared against College and Sector Averages
 - Followed by general observations and some areas of focus on data and some comments
 - With an exercise that asks the Rep teams to think about whether those areas of focus are appropriate – if not, why not/what other areas should be included
- Reps encouraged to come up with draft list of recommendations to give the new Reps to see if it's representative of what current students think
- Aim of recommendations is to influence Department's NSS action plans
 - Every year, Departments send an action plan to College, and if they don't achieve those then it can affect funding
 - Deadline this year for action plan submission is in December
- We as DPE and AOs need to:
 - Support the Dep Reps in influencing action plans
 - Give them advice and support as necessary
 - Make sure Faculty staff knows they can't expect to get a response/approval from us until mid-November
 - Make sure Departments send out action plans after the Reps have had a chance to study the data + get to know one another and have the opportunity to discuss the data

Faculty Rep Reports

- Consider making combined reports with Dep Reps to present at ERBs
 - Can follow a basic template e.g. split into teaching, feedback, coursework etc.
 - Each report should look at previous reports to see what has changed
- Try and for how long? Raise with ERB

SOLE

- Some Departments take SOLE seriously but some don't
- Ambiguity with what is happening, and how it's being replaced with Qualtrix
- Try to understand what is happening with SOLE at each Department? Raise with Dep Reps

Representation Policy

- Revised draft version of Rep Policy presented for initial impressions; main changes were on updating policy to remove discontinued meetings + making it more modern and sustainable
- PS noted regarding a clause about Departmental Representatives Committee: it may be a good idea for there to be a formal clause stating that Dep Reps should have regular, minuted meetings on at least a monthly basis
- The Representation Policy draft will now be brought forward to the ERB for further discussion.

Academic Standards Framework

- A single regulations document being assembled by College for all Taught programmes in the University
 - Noted that College plans to finalize the regulations by this academic year, with implementation for 2017/18
 - Regulations outline/explain what will happen e.g. if a student fails; apply to all Departments
- ECTS: 7.5/15/30 or 6/12/18?
- MSc Level 6 modules won't count towards Degree: PS to raise/object with FoE FTC?
- Resits and retakes
 - Students can benefit from compensated fails for optional modules, i.e. if they fail an optional module then they get an uplift
 - Double-standards in different Departments? If you get 35% they'll let you pass, but others need 40% - at least this is the case in FoE FTC
 - PS feels this should be the same across all Departments; to raise at next FTC meeting for FoE
- Mitigating Circumstances
 - Currently hand in mitigating circumstances before the exam, or sometimes the same day or a few days after

- New system proposed says you can send it in anytime, even after your results; you will then be allowed to resit no matter what – and not capped – though might have to take a year out
- It wouldn't be so bad if they are valid circumstances?
- CYS feels we shouldn't take a position either way and let College fight it out amongst themselves, as the status quo doesn't currently present a bad outcome
- But what happens for final year students? Can they lodge MCs after they have finished their degrees?
- Submission of coursework
 - Currently it says that students who submit late will get 0%
 - Late submissions should be a bit more lenient; should get that changed but make sure it's standard across all Departments, as some may have a scaling mechanism but others don't
 - Support from FoNS and V-PE? But also make sure staff gets feedback on-time too
- Have extended conversation with Reps especially zero-tolerance on late submissions

Welcome Packs

- CYS outlined the content of the Welcome Packs:
 - Welcome letter from CYS and respective A(A/L)Os
 - A "What We Expect from You/What We Promise to You" document
 - Imperial Plus information, specific to Reps
 - Basic FAQs (e.g. how to approach staff members, what is the Rep Network, what are the Reps' relationship to the Rep Network)
 - Contacts sheet
 - Freebies (pens + any other goodies that can be snagged from the Office)

Rep Leadership Development Workshop

- CYS working with Business School on a half-day leadership workshop for 20 Reps (for now because it's a pilot session)
 - This is to showcase the different types of leaders
 - B.S. to help with expertise and speakers
 - Union will evaluate the session
 - Working with Exec Ed team in the Business School who works with big companies
- Long-term aim is to develop something that will be given to the Union e.g. Imperial Plus to be available to everyone
- Selection procedure for now is a short application to ask Reps why they want to participate in this session, to remove people who might not be that interested
 - Then, perhaps a requirement for reports and ERB attendance