



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
Of the first ordinary meeting of the  
**Education and Representation Board**  
Of the Imperial College Union  
In the 2015/2016 session.

The meeting of the Education and Representation Board was held in the Union Building on the 15 October 2015 at 6pm in Meeting Room 3, Imperial College Union

**Present**

Deputy President (Education) - Chair  
RCSU President  
RCSU Academic Affairs Officer  
RSMU Academic Liaison Officer  
GSU Representative

Chun-Yin San  
James Badman  
Benjamin Fernando  
Rachael Shuttleworth  
Yu Xia

Aeronautics  
Bioengineering  
Biology  
Chemical Engineering  
Chemical Engineering  
Computing  
Earth Science and Engineering  
EEE  
EIE  
JMC  
Mathematics  
Physics

Edward Kardouss  
Sihao Lu  
Sinziana Giju  
Emilie Luddahl  
Eleni Peraki  
Robert Zhou  
Dominic Andrew  
Belen Gallego Vara  
Aditya Sakhuja  
Bryan Liu  
Sarah Wang  
Lloyd James

Representation and Campaigns Coordinator(Clerk) Sky Yarlett

**Apologies**

Lucinda Sandon-Allum, Benjamin Howitt, Chris Kaye, Andrew Olson Munday, Parikshat Singh, Liucheng Guo, Med Harris, Saloni Dattani, Rebekah Judge, Usama Asif, Renee Tonkin, Edrea Pan, Robert Zhou, Pascal Loose, Zachary Slingsby-Smith, Andrew Keenan.

**1. CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

- a) Chun Yin San (CYS) welcomed those in attendance and explained his vision for ERB over the course the next year. Welcoming discussion and decisions. CYS went on to recognise and commend the work of the previous Deputy President (Education) Pascal Loose and the Rep Team.
- b) CYS reminded attendees that the next SACAs ceremony date is 18 April 2016, and informed attendees that the nomination will open soon, with the aim being two main pushed for autumn term and also spring term.
  - i. Benjamin Fernando (BF) made the point that this might be in college holiday season.

- c) CYS also informed attendees that the 27 April is a Rep Thank You event being organised by current Vice Provost Education Debra Humphris.

## **2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

- a) CYS invited attendees to raise any objections to the previous minutes, or identify any inaccuracies.
- b) Bryan Liu (BL) identified that he was in attendance at the last meeting but had been left off the minutes. Sky Yarlett (SY) will update the minutes to reflect BL attendance.
- c) The minutes were accepted.

## **RESOLVED:**

- 1) To accept the minutes**

## **3. MATTERS ARISING – none**

## **4. UPDATES FROM DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)**

- a) Report presented as a paper is from Union Council, it is a short overview of the work Cyn has focused on over the last few months.
- b) Key points from the report are:
  - i. Focus on relationship building in postgraduate side of college. Including regular catchups. Met with faculty deans and vice deans and introducing / reintroducing union
  - ii. CYS has sat on a lot of college committees.
  - iii. CYS is committed to working more closely with Academic Affairs Officers (AAOs)
  - iv. Rep elections CYS reminded attendees that nominations for Rep Elections close tonight at midnight. That many positions are filled and that we are receiving many names for PG reos which have been elected in house.
  - v. NSS and PRES survey analysis are ongoing. Planning on publish NSS result is going to be published in Nov.
  - vi. CYS reopened Restaurants and sorting out the shuttle bus. SY clarified that CYS argued to support keeping Wolfson Resturant open.
  - vii. Training students on using Panopto - this is an area of interest for CYS which will be covered later.
  - viii. Co-curricular development opportunities for volunteers - CYS is working on this with student development team within the union
- c) Questions / comments
  - i. BF - We have seen number of reps standing decline over the last few years. Is it because the nominations are now closed?
  - ii. CYS questions the premise of the statement - will look into the data to identify whether this is true.
  - iii. SY mentions that this was also discussed at last year's ERB - that there are pros and cons to having a revealed nomination list.

## **5. UPDATES FROM MEETINGS WITH CONSTIUENT UNION ACADEMIC (AFFAIRS /LIASON/ &WELFARE) OFFICERS**

### **5.1 Meeting with PG Academic & Welfare Officers**

- i. There were no concrete outcomes from the meeting. Keen to look into cohort building and formalise it. As PhD can be part of a Doctoral Training Centre which is more like a classroom, and PG students who are not part of a DTC feel that they are missing out on this.

- ii. Research supervisors can be a really mixed bag, with some being fantastic but also cases of poor supervisors. CYS keen to look at introducing a 360 degree review process of supervisors.
- iii. Welfare issues specific to FoNS - that PG students find themselves working very long hours for less pay, with pressure to do so or feeling that they will be worth less academically.
- iv. Rep training - running more training sessions with focus on PG students

### **5.2 Meeting with UG Academic & Welfare Officers**

- i. CYS explains VPAGE (Vice Provost Advisory Group Education) and Faculty Teaching Committees. That he has attended a lot of these.
- ii. Representation policy - Jennie Watson and Cyin are planning to work together CYS planning to bring it to next ERB in Nov.

### **5.3 Update from Dep Reps with regards to actions for Departmental NSS action plans**

CYS - how are they using the action plans - were they useful?

- i. Physics - didn't do very well, lots of areas to improve on. Esp quality and feedback. Agreed with core objectives.
- ii. Biology - spent last couple of days reading report - there are lots of issues
- iii. Chem Eng - starting action plan and discuss at SSC
- iv. EIE/EEE - yet to start working on it.
- v. Math - they were quite good.
- vi. ESE - what is meant by the union in the NSS question?
  - 1. It was clarified that it is left to the interpretation of the student - they might mean Imperial College Union or the Constituent Union in their area.
- vii. Bioeng - did okay.
- viii. JMC / Comp - urgent stuff came up so got sidetracked
- ix. Aero - meeting DUGs to discuss

## **7. FACULTY REP REPORTS**

- a) Parikshat suggested a faculty rep report - which AAOs will coordinate and will work with all dep reps to submit it. CYS asks attendees if it's good idea - do dep reps like it?
- b) Emilie Lunddahl (EL) - how much writing is expected?
  - i. CYS - we will work on creating a standardised template for the report and that roughly a paragraph per dept.
- c) We will run on 3 month basis to see how it goes.

## **8. IMPERIAL HORIZONS EXAM TIMES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2015/2016.**

- a) CLCC came to CYS over the summer period with a proposal to address exams for Horizons students - and worked closely with AAOs to find their input and thoughts.
- b) CLCC - needed to arrange exams. Trying to find fixed exam slot. They presented 6 options, many of which seemed untenable. CYS suggested that exams should be last Monday / Tuesday of spring. Asked group of their thoughts to this, and whether this would cause issues.
- c) Rachel Shuttleworth highlighted that she'd already mentioned to CYS that the Monday / Tuesday of Spring term would be untenable for ESE students who will be on fieldwork.
- d) EL - asked if there is an option for students to choose whether spring or summer exams would be better

- e) CYS - to suggest to CLCC that summer session of exams might be better for many students
- f) There was general discussion around saturday exam options, topics of discussion included an all day exam session on saturday and the pro's and con's of it.
- g) That the CLCC should consider asking departments to clear 2 hours of the schedule - that they can do it for commemoration day and so it should be possible for exams.

## 9. IMPERIAL HORIZON REPRESENTATION SYSTEM

- a) CYS refers those in attendance to read the paper, and outlined to attendees the reasoning behind the proposal.
  - i. The current method of managing the Horizon reps is patchy and all horizon reps report to DPE and it proves hard for them to communicate with students.
  - ii. The proposal seeks to address this and to more clearly reflect the horizon structure. CYS asks attendees to feed in their thoughts and feedback on the proposal.
- b) BL - when are we looking to elect the Academic Officers? Would it make sense to elect them in the Big Elections?
  - i. EL / Belen Gallego Vara (BV) - Horizon selection doesnt align with this date. probably wouldnt be practical.
- c) BF - Is it possible to give them a term which lasts a full year rather than an academic year - this runs the risk of having people in post who are not students.
  - i. Also - if an Academic Officer (Horizons) is equivalent in rank to an ICSMSU AAO then do they sit on council? Do they want to? If this is the case this needs to go to council.
- d) Aditya Sakhuja (AS) raised the question with the short courses which are just a term whether it's needed to have such a formal rep structure - or to continue in an informal manner.
  - i. Suggestion of a second election in January to 'mop up'
- e) CYS clarifies that course liaison reps are similar to half year reps, and field reps are more likely to be year reps.
- f) AS - Suggest to ask each course leader to have volunteers for Course Liason reps - and encourage course leader to send names to union.

### ACTION:

1. CYS will change the proposal to reflect the general discussion, and follow up with a vote online.

## 10. ACADEMIC STANDARDS REGULATIONS

- a) CYS outlines that the aim of this is to implement in 2017 a document of all regulations in one place. The decision on regulations will be made by the end of the year. There are 3 particular areas CYS wants to focus on: Compensated Fails, Mitigating Circumstances after exams, Zero Tolerance on late submission
- b) Compensated fails take place in **optional** module - if you fail the optional module the dept will give you a free pass.
  - i. Optional is determined in department - so it could be external to your course, or where you can choose anything in your course. You cant resit an elective in Chem Eng.
  - ii. The aim should be encouraging more people to pass.
  - iii. CYS clarified that the reason this was brought up is because Pari Singh - the AAO for CGCU - wanted to take a discussion

to the Faculty of Engineering (FoE), teaching committee to ask each department to standardise the percentage at which compensated fails are allowed. CYS brought it to ERB to encourage discussion and awareness in this area.

- iv. It seems unclear what the procedure is in each department - it seems common that departments don't like publicly stating regulations about failing.
- v. RS - Clarifying that there would be an aim to evenly distribute of the % of a pass, there is no uniform way of dealing with it.
- vi. BF - there seems to be common issues within engineering with this, however FoNS students can take engineering modules and masters courses have a higher pass rate at 50%

#### **Action**

##### **1. PS to have FoE discussion on this. EL - dep reps might not have good info - probs better to speak to DUGs**

##### b) Mitigating circumstances after exams

- i. Currently there is a time limit to submit mitigating circumstances - around a week after exam / coursework deadline. The proposal is to let students submit mitigating circumstances for currently undefined amount of time.
- ii. CYS know this might be a difficult issue for the union and ERB to take a stance on, and there is an option to not take a stance on this.
- iii. BF - that if we extend the time that mitigating circumstances are available it's open to abuse. That currently the system is that you have to submit mitigating circumstances 3 days prior to an exam.
- iv. BV expresses concern that you shouldn't be able to get a grade and then challenge it using mitigating circumstances.
- v. SY advises that often students who go through trauma close to an exam may either not be able to process it until after the exam, and in addition that the pressure of being a student at Imperial means that often students only seek help when they have failed.
- vi. RS - if mitigating circumstances being extended means that a student may be less traumatising knowing it isn't under time pressure.
- vii. With provisional exam grades - if you feel you've done badly you might submit mitigating circumstances.
- viii. CYS asks if this would be helpful for Masters students - as they are only here for a year.

#### **Actions:**

##### **2. CYS suggests that while this discussion is helpful it might be worth having a wider working group on academic standards regulation.**

##### c) Zero-tolerance on late submission of coursework

- i. Outline: Currently there is no acceptance of late submission of coursework - there exists a 100% late penalty policy. In the review of the Academic Standards regulation there is an option to get rid of this policy.
- ii. CYS advises the board that if we decide to get rid of it it's likely that we'll need a clear and strong stance with guidance as to what will replace it

- iii. Question on why does this policy exist - once we understand this then we can challenge it.
- iv. There was a general consensus that the rule is too strict - often there is a small technical issue which can delay the submission. Or a small issue which doesn't seem to warrant a mitigating circumstance.
- v. Also there seems to be one rule of staff and another for students in relation to late submission and late feedback.
- vi. CYS raised the question of if we got rid of this what would we replace it with?
  - 1. Implement a scaling system for penalties?
  - 2. BF - What is the reason for changing it to zero tolerance? Is it to reduce number of late submissions?
  - 3. What was the policy previous to zero tolerance?
- vii. In some cases there is an option to only submit once, students are keen to see this change to multiple uploads, which would allow a previous draft to be used in the worst case scenario.
  - 1. This seems to depend on department / technology used for submission.
  - 2. There are sometimes physical hand ins such as lab books which you can only submit once.
- viii. Why are we changing this? Are we seeking to protect students who have a valid reason for late submission or help students who are perfecting their work and taking a gamble by submitting late.

**ACTION:**

- 3. CYS to put together a new paper and raise some of these issues and others at the academic standards framework steering group**

**11. COMMUNICATING THE REP NETWORK TO STUDENTS**

- a) CYS had hoped to sit down with the Marketing Team to put together mock posters, however time constraints has not allowed this to be possible.
- b) CYS will send over something soon to members of ERB.
- c) CYS aims to have posters printed before next ERB.
- d) The posters will seek to inform students of the levels of the rep system - with Dep Reps & Year Reps facing students and AAOs / DPE facing college.
- e) CYS asked Dep Reps to help with the PG posters as currently there are very few PG reps.
- f) SY mentioned that there is an abundance of love your rep tshirt if reps wanted them.
- g) Consensus that ERB felt the tshirts are cheesy
- h) SY asked ERB if they had better ideas of communicating stuff to help the Education and Welfare team.

**12. PANOPTO RECORDING TRAINING**

- a) The idea is to equip students to be able to set up lecture recording, minimising the reasons why there would be no recordings.
- b) CYS asks how many departments would be interested in this training
- c) Widespread interest - Chemical Engineering already organise this.
- d) FoNS - apparently students get paid £50 to be a lecture recorder.
- e) CYS questions whether we like the idea of paying students to do this.
- f) Chemical Engineering say that year reps are a good base of being able to record the lecture.

- g) Physics - students have to manually steer the camera.

**Action**

1. **CYS to speak to Mimi Johnson about setting up this training.**

**13. CONTENT FOR REP TRAINING**

- a) Outline: CYS outlines that the rep training is being changed with the 3 large sessions being broken down into 20+ smaller sessions
- b) BF - feels that often the style of training is really patronising and that students at Imperial would prefer to feel confused than patronised.
  - i. CYS asks what content would BF and others like to see in training
  - ii. Content suggestions: How to draft a useful email? Skills based - how to develop communication skills, how to make a poll on facebook, set up a mail merge.
- c) AS - is it worth making the training not compulsory?
  - i. SY - we say it's compulsory, knowing that it will help students who are reps, and that if we make it not compulsory students will not attend
  - ii. RS - compromise, we should make it compulsory for new reps, but old reps optional.
- d) BF - if we can provide a clear outline in advance to tell students what they are going to learn at the training would be helpful.
- e) BF we should work more closely with the faculty - AAOs are well placed to know and understand the faculty.
- f) SY mentions that as we are developing the training we'd like to see Dep Reps and AAOs working with us to deliver the training.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) Debra Humphris is leaving - CYS will circulate the date and encourages reps to attend.
- b) While the new appointment of Vice Provost Education is being made Sue Gibson from the graduate school will stand in.
- c) BF - Is there going to be an officer on the panel, CYS confirms that the President will be on the panel and that DPE will be involved in other ways.

Meeting Closed 20.30