

President's Union Council Report 6th December

General

Since the last meeting I have dealt with several important operational issues that I would like to make you aware of:

- Annual Report – the annual report has been successfully internally and externally audited without any major issues. The College's Audit Committee praised the progress in financial sustainability and control measures the Union has made over the last four years, although it recognises that further work still has to be done to underpin the Union's future.
- Managing Director Probation Review – Jarlath "Jarlsberg" O'Hara has now been the Managing Director of Imperial College Union for six months. I am pleased to report that he has bedded into the organisation well and is respected amongst students, trustees and staff alike.
- Incident Monitoring and Support – students may be aware that several incidents have occurred in the last few weeks. Together with College we have been monitoring events as they unfold and have been supporting affected students where appropriate. I would like to commend Alex Compton for the role she has played over the last two weeks in supporting students at a difficult time.

I have also taken three days of annual leave following the "beginning of the year" rush.

Strategy

I have been overseeing the development of the Union's new strategy for the next three years, which has involved staff and students from every area of the Union. We have been seeking feedback through focus groups and our "GOAT" (Go Out And Talk) sessions across our campuses.

We are also seeking response from our strategy survey. The response rate has been heartening and we have received general positive feedback on the survey, although some SPAG and functional problems were present upon launch. These problems were resolved almost immediately and we thank those students who helped identify improvements.

The results of the consultations will be analysed and will help inform the direction of the Union for the next four years. Thank you to all students who have taken the time to share their opinions and helped reach out to their peers.

Education

I have continued to assist Luke and the Education & Representation team on a number of issues including the Teaching & Learning Strategy, the Late Submission consultation, SOLE review and alterations to the College's modifications policy. Details can be found in the Deputy-President (Education)'s report.

Societal Engagement

In line with their strategy, College have developed a Societal Engagement (SE) framework, which aims to encompass all of the engagement work that happens across the University. I have been leading student representation on these projects as a member of the SE steering group, *Community Engagement* and *Supporting Our People* working groups, and the *Invention Rooms* steering group. Recently, I was also involved in the awards panel for the President's Awards for Excellence in Societal

Engagement. These awards were created to recognise the countless efforts made by students and staff in sharing the wonders of Imperial with the rest of society and the awards recognise achievements in SE in line with research and teaching. Details of this year's award can be found here: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/college-staff-awards/presidents-awards-for-excellence/societal-engagement-excellence/past-winners/>.

Furthermore, I am pleased to announce that the College will include a student specific category for this year's awards. Nominations are now open if you wish to apply: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/college-staff-awards/presidents-awards-for-excellence/societal-engagement-excellence/>.

West Basement

The project has progressed since the last Council and College Estates Projects have put in motion the works.

Preliminary works, consisting of clearing the Jazz & Rock room and removing the existing soundproofing will be underway imminently. It is not expected to have huge impact on users of the basement and they have been informed. Works should only be taking place between 10 am and 4pm, although contractors may be on site either side of these hours. Contractors will be accessing the space through the fire escape opposite the J&R Studio to minimise disruptions. At this stage there should be minimal impact to student use and the rest of the basement, including the West Basement storage (although you may wish to enter via the external door, down the metal steps in the northwest corner of the quad), is fully accessible.

Further works will be taking place to re-routing the services in three bedrooms in West Beit. I am informed that the occupants of these rooms were assisted in moving elsewhere in Beit or Princess Gardens by College for the last couple of weeks of term. The students have retained existing access to their corridors so they can still access their kitchens if they wish to for social purposes. The students will have the option of moving back to their original rooms or remaining in the current rooms for the rest of the academic year.

Please be sensible when workers are in the area. They have strict codes of conduct, but if you see something that you are unsure about please report it to me.

Week Zero

Last year the Officer Trustee team, led by Lucinda Sandon-Allum, worked with College to establish the feasibility of a "Week Zero" – a week inserted before the current start of term to allow first year students to settle in before any academic work. The week would have many benefits allowing students to get to know their new local area, understanding the services available to them through the Union & College, making friends and getting to know their Department outside of academic work. An initial consultation with Council was conducted by the OT team last year and this Council was generally resolved that the benefits outweighed the added cost (£292-300* on average) to students.

The creation of a College-wide working group to oversee the development of the week is set to happen in the new year with the first Week Zero to take place at the beginning of the 2018-9 academic year. Appended is a copy of the presentation created by Campus Services to inform stakeholders about Week Zero.

* <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/ug/fees-and-funding/managing-your-money/living-costs/>

I would be interested to hear the views of Council on the issue of charging and affordability. Are we still in agreement that the benefit of Week Zero outweighs the additional cost and that it does not establish an affordability barrier?

Citizens UK

Since the last Council meeting we have met with representatives from West London Citizens with a view to running an action sometime in the new year. As of yet no Officer Trustees or members of staff have received the 6-day training session. It is not entirely clear what value our affiliation is providing the Union at this stage, although we will remain committed to engaging with the organisation for the full length of the trial period.