

RSMU Report

Union Council
23.10.18

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RSMU Overview

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of RSMU's activities so far and any plans for the year. I have detailed my plans and those of my officers below.

I would like to draw your attention to my second goal to form an RSMU Outreach programme and the section on RSMA as I believe they would most benefit from discussion at Union Council.

Goals As President

1. Increasing profile of RSMU as an academic and welfare support system
2. Developing RSMU outreach programme
3. Supporting and facilitating committee initiatives

Goal 1

Increasing profile of RSMU as an academic and welfare support system

- *President's update*: a short newsletter with everything that might be relevant to any student at a given time i.e. key dates, regalia sales etc. The aim was to produce a short and well-formatted email that would be sent out to all members 3 times a term. This will create a constant flow of communication from the committee to the members, without the emails feeling like spam.
 - Added an area at the bottom of the emails for members to advertise their club or society to all members of the RSMU, aiming to promote engagement
- *Representation network*: once all reps are elected will organise for both ESE and Materials elects can meet each other, as well as interact further with dep reps and RSMU officers.

Goal 2

Developing RSMU outreach programme.

- Firstly, I met with the Head of Outreach for Imperial to discuss the viability of this idea. She offered any support once we come up with the exact format of the programme. Have met with departmental society presidents who are keen to collaborate and will be following up in the coming week.
 - Geophysics are already affiliated to the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG) and are having an outreach day on the 23rd of November. The SEG student chapter is currently affiliated to the Geophysics Society.
 - Materials Society were looking at inviting Sixth Form students to participate in panel events later in the term
 - Materials Department are working on developing 'baskets' with activities that can be taken into schools. After initial discussions they would be keen to collaborate with RSMU to organise this.
 - De la Beche (Geology) have no plans currently in place but are keen to collaborate in the development
 - Have yet to speak to the Earth Sciences representative for outreach purposes, but from conversations with other members of department it appears that they would be keen to work together



RSMU Academics

RSMU Academic Liaison Officer has identified three main aims for the academic year:

1. Improve communication (both of feedback on assignments and of admin related issues)
2. Enhance staff-student relationship (and staff-staff)
3. Encourage the use of targeted teaching strategies

As the RSMU consists of only two departments, communication between the academic and welfare networks, along with the departmental societies, is easy and a success. The ALO is collaborating with the welfare network and dep socs, largely regarding aim 2. Following ALO and WO discussion and initiation, DepSocs, welfare and academic networks are combining their efforts to organise events designed to create an inclusive environment and a platform for student-staff interaction. Additionally, ALO suggested the possibility of a Materials staff vs. ESE staff quiz, which would be a joint academic and welfare venture, and aligns with WO aims for better integration between departments.

Considering communication, the Materials Dep Rep has been working closely with staff to solve the extensive communication issues (largely admin) that arose last year. In combined efforts of staff and Dep Rep, a variety of solutions are being trialled. Of note, the use of CELCAT for timetabling and the use of Microsoft Teams for better communication department wide. ALO will follow the progression and usage of Teams closely with the intention of reporting its successes and failings directly to ESE Dep Rep and academic staff. ESE don't have communication issues, but currently lack a structured approach, and the implementation of Teams may provide this.

As a development of aim 1, the communication of student opinion appears to be critical in Materials following NSS results and poor SOLE completion. The ALO discussed this with both Dep Reps, hoping to learn from ESE's high completion scores. The concluding fact was that ESE directly see the impact of completing SOLE. ALO and Materials Dep Rep intend to work closely with DUGS to try and improve SOLE completion and promote student voice. Development of teaching strategy has currently seen no progress as ALO gets established in role and gathers information. ALO will engage with new/existing schemes relevant to the previous (e.g. StudentShapers). Additionally, ALO intends to continually communicate relevant academic events to students within the RSMU, again in conjunction with the DepSocs, to promote the academic development of all students within the RSMU.



RSMU Welfare

RSMU Welfare Officer has outlined 3 main aims for her strategy:

1. Improve the engagement in welfare
 2. Bridge the division between ESE and Materials
 3. Change and improve the branding of 'welfare'
- Staff Student Tea and Biscuits: will be a continued welfare event. We are looking to alternate between ones organised by departments and the RSMU to promote interaction between departments
 - Also organising themed ones, our first one "survived freshers fortnight" is happening on Tuesday 16.02
 - In strong collaboration with DepReps, they are considering joint movie nights for the departments
 - Looking at a campaign based on breaking down cliques and cultural barriers. This still requires more research before finalising it as a final theme.

Events

- Freshers' Fortnight
 - We hosted 5 events: mini golf, pub crawl, bar night, RSM Olympics and Freshers' Dinner
 - Mini Golf: Was very well attended, we staggered groups to decrease waiting time and generally people who went were very satisfied
 - Pub Crawl: we went to 7 pubs, no complaints were made by the pubs, there was some chanting started by various members present, but the committee were not promoting them. They were sparse until the last pub.
 - Bar Night: was well attended, but thankfully we did not reach the capacity of the Union Bar, so people were not stuck waiting outside.
 - RSM Olympics: had to be rescheduled from Saturday to Sunday due to poor weather. From conversations with members we identified it as one of the factors for poor attendance
 - Freshers Dinner: We sold out of tickets for the dinner hosted in Tara Cophorne. We had no problems during the dinner or afterwards. This time we only had 2 courses to decrease the price.
- Refreshers Week
 - In order to promote joining of our sports teams and to entice members who are not highly involved in Bottle Match we are adding a 'Refreshers Week' in the third week of January, where sports teams will open up a free session and we will also have a bar night. This will be followed by 'Hill Cup Week' organised by the deptsocs, which is why we won't be putting on more social events. During that week events are hosted where the deptsocs are scored against each other and afterwards one comes out victorious.



Clubs and Societies

- *Bottle Match*: Planned for weekend of 22.02.19, this year hosted at home. Pitches booked, in conversation with CSM, Anthony (VP Clubs&Societies) is looking at budget. We will be seeking financial aid from departments and RSMA.
- *DepSocs*:
 - Materials Society are flourishing, having received sponsorship and are organising a careers fair in late October. They are really pushing for engagement of MSc and PhD students.
 - De la Beche are running their first trip, they might be looking at joining Geophysics and looking for joint sponsorship
 - Geophysics: are currently in debt, but my committee have met with DPFS to create a plan to aid this. My VPCS is optimistic and believes that by the end of the year their debt level will be 25% of what it was in August
- *Sports*: Both teams that seeked sponsorship (football and hockey) have been successful. They are 2 of the biggest teams we have so them being in a strong financial position is very motivating. We have had a strong set of sign ups to all clubs during the year, we will monitor how this will translate to memberships bought

RSMA Collaboration

At the most recent meeting we discussed 3 key aspects

- Promotion of RSMA and what they provide
 - At the moment not, many people are aware of things, such as the hardship fund and bursaries, they provide
 - RSMA will look at sponsoring DepSocs to be advertised in the magazines we have (MatSoc Magazine and The Prospector)
- Transitions from RSMU to RSMA
 - Prices for annual RSMA dinner are now lower for recent graduates
 - It was discussed for all RSMU members to automatically become RSMA members
- Enlarging the body of students that sit on RSMA Committee meetings
 - At the moment only the RSMU President and Honorary Secretary sit on said committee
 - It was discussed whether DepSoc Presidents or DepReps should be involved.



Follow up on *RSMU Cultural Change* as outlined by Rob Tomkies

As an attachment to the final council report my predecessor outlined changes that have happened as part of a social change taking place within our CU. We have not done a presidential yard, however we decided to keep freshers' yards. To ensure these were safe we held sign ups as people entered bar night and then monitored whether they would be able to complete the yard. For lack of space we did not have non-drinking games this time, something we will be looking at for next bar night but is something we will consider for our bar night in November. We are struggling with retiring some of the old chants as they are still started by some of the members. As a committee we do not start them but will be looking at stopping them more proactively in future events.

Items for Discussion

1. RSMA
 - a. What do you think a good way to engage with them is?
 - b. Do you think more student members should sit on RSMA committee? If so who do you think should be involved?

2. RSMU Outreach
 - a. Do you have any experience in the area and could share any advice?
 - b. Do you have any views on how such an event could run?

If you have any other comments or would like to discuss RSMU activities to a greater depth, you can contact me at rsm.chair@imperial.ac.uk

