

Imperial College Union Council Report

Rob Tomkies, President

Introduction

In the three weeks since last Union Council (+ 1 week before that which was when I wrote my last report), I have had an unusually quiet period in terms of meetings – this has meant that I’ve been able to put a fair bit of time either in to projects or making sure that operationally things are on track.

New this Union Council – how exactly did I spend my time – support functions or pop up problems are not included in this – it is simply the calendared time allotted over the time period:

Just for clarity operational includes complaint investigation and disciplinary, email admin, comms etc.

Updated 30/11/2018				
College Meetings	Project Work	Student + Union Meetings	Board of Trustee meetings + work	Operational
33.5 hours	41.5 hours	18 hours	14.5 hours	31 hours

Report on Progress

Club, Society, Projects (CSPs) and Constituent Union (CU) Support

- Key staff figures have been away and so work on setting up platforms on plexus has been slow. We are looking to launch the first student platforms for constituent Unions in January with clubs and societies shortly after.

Next steps: Setting up of platforms to start and CSP platforms to follow.

- The Times relationship is now fully up and running – for those of you that haven’t heard this includes events, an ambassador scheme, training workshops, free subscriptions etc. The launch event went off successfully last Tuesday with around 100 people attending and in the first three days of the offer going out 1350 people took up the times subscription – haven't looked at the latest figures.

Next steps: Now that the agreement and relationship is secured with a student focus I will largely be stepping back from this to allow the ambassadors and Felix to really drive this forward and make sure that it’s a success.

Governance – Process Development

- The Graduate Student Union working group is still ticking along. Of the four workstreams, governance and representation has been the most active recently and been where I have spent my time. A new structure for GSU governance has been constructed and will be brought to council by the GSU. The other three work streams – Activities and Events, Identity and Communications, Resources - have been defined and memberships constructed with remit defined.

Next steps: The other three workstreams will be meeting around the time of this Union Council. Priorities for now due to time constraints are the governance structures (changes need to be made by Jan 22nd Union Council) and Events (the “Refreshers” events previously discussed)

- Union Council work has focussed heavily on the operational processes recently. I have developed a spreadsheet which should automate the voting record compiling so that going forward this should be a very simple task. We have also evaluated that operational sides of set up, seating plan and so on so that now (today) things should require much less time.

Next steps: Hopefully heading forward this should be a much slicker and so the next challenges will look at the communication of UC outwards and the most appropriate platform as well as beginning to examine the format of council itself.

- I mentioned previously concerns around prioritisation – the larger project is ongoing however myself and the Managing Director have started an evaluation of where we spend our time so that data gather we can see what guidelines are reasonable, heading forward. This is part of what generated the figures in the intro table.

Support for the Deputy Presidents

- Worked with Becky and Wellbeing to help work through disciplinary and complaint procedures with reps.
- Worked with Becky to tackle the solutions to the Bursary concerns raised previously where an individual year group received less. This was started last year and is now nearing completion – being raised at the Access Participation and Student Support Working Group before now heading for approval at Provost Board.
- Worked with Alejandro on the GSU reform.
- James and I had the President, Provost and Associate Provost (Academic Planning) round to the Union to show them the planned redevelopments to the Union Concert Hall before having the expenditure passed at College Council – this is now all in the clear.

Next steps: As detailed in relevant reports.

Operational Highlights

- After pushing at College Council – The President and Provost have for the first time now agreed to include a section on student experience in the college strategy – previously there has been the heading "student experience" and then nothing about the student experience under it. They took this on board and we are now working on the section together.
- Again - for the first-time college have added student wellbeing to the strategic risk register – this has been after cumulative pressure and the realisation that this is increasingly a risk for their whole business model – rather than something to worry about on the side.
- The Constitution and Byelaws have now been examined at College Council who have expressed that they are happy with the desired changes and that it reflects well the relationship that College and the Union have – this now needs to come to Board of Trustees for approval before it can be sent to the charity commission.

Closing Comments

As always, I am available in person and via email for any questions you may have on my report or the Union's work.

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