

Imperial College Union Council Report

Alejandro Luy, Deputy President (Education)

Introduction

Highlights from the past few weeks include progress on the Rep Review project, I-Explore and StudentShapers developments and lobbying College on key issues (summarised at the end).

Report on Progress

This is not an exhaustive list. Feel free to ask me about my other goals and initiatives. Previous progress can be found in my past reports.

Goal 1 - Produce NSS and PTES Responses in record time and use them to drive for change

You can find the responses on the Union website at <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/responses>

- The first College NSS/PTES Working Group met on the 12th of December to discuss College level actions to be taken to improve the student experience. The meeting was successful and a report outlining best practice to be adopted across College has been produced to be submitted to Provost's board.
- The report was well received at Provost's Board, but the board requested key actions to endorse. The NSS/PTES Working Group met again on the 4th of March to discuss progress and chose some key recommendations to send back to Provost's board for endorsement which will then be communicated to departments as key actions to take as soon as possible.

Goal 2 - Conduct a Review of the UG and PG Academic Representation Network

The purpose of this review is to map the entire network, and to improve training, support and communication.

- The Rep Review project is not just a review of where we are but mainly a plan of how to get to where we need to be.
- I've collated ideas and problems for the project from ERB, conversations with reps and previous reviews and have conducted a scoping exercise to decide what to tackle in the project. I'm currently working on getting buy-in from key people who will need to drive the project once I've finished as DPE.
- The Microsoft Teams Pilots were reviewed at the ERB on the 28th of February with the decision taken to delay ARN-wide launch until an implementation plan is in place. This is being fit into the Rep Review.

Goal 3 - Spearhead student involvement in student-facing projects such as StudentShapers, Imperial Award and I-Explore

You can find out more about these projects online (links on my profile page on the Union website).

- The I-Explore ECTS issue has been resolved with Horizons agreeing to revert all non-language modules to 5 ECTS. Language modules will remain at 7.5 ECTS – 5 will count for I-Explore and 2.5 will be extra credit. This is because the language modules have the CEFR qualification

associated with them. This wouldn't have been possible without ERB expressing that it was the preferred option.

- I have finished the PGT Imperial Award consultation report and am waiting to present it and the recommendations for how to make the IA more attractive to PGT students at the next Steering Group meeting.
- The StudentShapers Steering Group, which I sit on, has launched many projects which will provide opportunities for students to engage directly with their education.

Goal 4 - Fight for improved feedback for students across Imperial

- Most departments have done a good job of decreasing assessment burden (quantity and frequency) to give students more "breathing space" in their curriculum to digest content and reflect and improve based on feedback.
- Most have explicitly committed to adhering to the College's feedback policy (2-week turnaround) or have explicitly stated where they won't (typically larger assessments) and that students will be clearly informed of when they can expect their feedback. I have challenged the departments who haven't explicitly committed to the College's feedback policy.
- The pedagogy transformation projects which will be happening over the next couple of years, along with the input from the many recently hired teaching fellows across College, will lead to more flipped-classroom style teaching which will embed continuous feedback into the learning experience. I am endorsing these projects where appropriate.

Goal 5 - Achieve over 2000 nominations in this year's Student Academic Choice Awards

- We achieved 1566 nominations and over 800 nominated staff despite missing the representation coordinators in the Education & Welfare team and the SACAs overlapping with the first week of LE19 leading to mixed messaging – a huge success.
- Many staff have responded to us making it very clear that being nominated for a SACA means a lot to them – evidence of positive culture change, the impact of the SACAs.

Lobbying College

I have received some feedback that some students feel that I do not lobby College sufficiently on key issues. I have summarised the areas where I am pressuring College below in no particular order. If a UC member feels that I am missing a key topic then let me know.

- Increased investment in better teaching spaces (both lecture theatres and flat-spaces)
- Maintenance of borderline classification discretion to give students who are near the borderline a fair opportunity to receiving the higher classification (other institutions have gotten rid of borderline classification discretion – we don't want that)
- AMR and PTES action plans that contain *tangible, effective actions* to address weaknesses in the student experience (I've challenged 2 departments to re-write their plans)
- A College vision on the student experience it is committed to delivering
- Addressing of deadline clashes to avoid peaks in student stress and workload
- Clearly defined expectations between students and staff to empower students to challenge when they are not receiving an appropriate level/quality of support/interaction (Postgraduates and StudentShapers)
- Availability of exit degrees to allow students who need to leave Imperial 'early' to receive a qualification worthy of the work they put in up to that point

- For Reps to have access to the data and documentation that they need in order to lobby their departments
- Common Rooms for all students

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

dpeducation@imperial.ac.uk | @icu_dpe | 020 7594 5646 | IC ext: 45646