

# President Report to Union Council – January 2020

Abhijay P. Sood

## Highlights:

- Ethical Investment/Socially Responsible Investment Policy Working Group
- Reprioritisation exercise
- Recruitment of a new managing director

| College Meetings & Prep | Student + Union Meetings & Prep | Operational work (day-to-day) | Project work (major goals) | Misc |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------|
| 19%                     | 28%                             | 46%                           | 6%                         | 1%   |

## Updates:

- **Ethical Investment:**
  - At the last [College Council](#) meeting, a paper submitted by ICU was passed setting up a working group to formulate a [socially responsible investment policy](#).
  - In our view, this was the easiest and most constructive way to make the investment portfolio (i.e. what the College does with its money) more ethical.
  - I'm a member of this group alongside a small number of senior College staff, and we have numerous meetings scheduled throughout January.
  - The working group is taking submissions until January 31<sup>st</sup>, at [sri.policy@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:sri.policy@imperial.ac.uk). It will report back to College Council on February 13<sup>th</sup>.
- **Reprioritisation exercise:**
  - The Union leadership team consists of myself, the deputy presidents, and the senior full-time management staff in the Union.
  - From the start of the year we have had a "business plan" – a to-do list of major projects we need to work on, combining manifesto goals with existing priorities.
  - In light of the challenges we're facing (e.g. Health & Safety) and the absence of our senior-most member of staff, we felt the need to reassess our priorities as an organisation.
  - We booked out a day to work on this on Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - We will share the outcomes of this (our new list of priorities) once this has been formalised and a clear document has been put together.
- **Recruitment of a new Managing Director:**
  - Our managing director left at the end of last term.
  - We have met candidates for an interim replacement (on 16-1).
  - We are briefing a recruitment firm on our requirements for a full-time replacement for the next academic year, to inform their search.
- **Halls rent** will be discussed as part of a separate agenda item.

## Upcoming:

- **Block grant business case/interim strategy:**
  - One of the major pieces of work we have to conduct this term is a **renegotiation of the Union's block grant**.
  - In requesting money from the university, we will have to prepare a business case, explaining why various things require funding.
  - As we establish our priorities, it's important we consider things that don't necessarily have a direct financial impact but could impact costs indirectly e.g.

changing the priorities for a particular staff team. This means we will need to build a strategy for 2020-21 alongside our block grant business case. Work on a more complete Union strategy spanning several years will recommence next year.

- Completing this successfully is a significant piece of work, for which the new interim MD will be accountable, but all of us (particularly myself) will be intimately involved.
- **Governance Officer recruitment**
  - I am on an interview panel for the Governance Officer (the role which provides support to, among other things, these meetings) on 20-1.
- **Work towards manifesto goals (below)**

#### Key goals:

##### College Goal: Change the way decisions are made – **Stalled**

- To make sure College is making decisions in the best interests of students and staff, I want to make sure **people affected by decisions are involved in the decision-making process**.
- This is a big project, but I believe it's likely the easiest way to bring significant change to Imperial.
- Due to recent firefighting, I've been unable to make significant progress on this.

##### Union Goal 1: Transparency – **In progress**

- We've written a plan for OT communications, committing ourselves to:
  - More frequent posts on social media
  - An interview series in *Felix*
  - "OT Tours" across our campuses
  - Our blogs/written articles for more detailed stuff
- If students can't easily find out what we're up to, we aren't doing our jobs properly – whenever something big happens, we're going to communicate about it directly

##### Union Goal 2: Protecting/Improving our Services – **In progress**

- Kitchens in 568 are set to reopen soon pending the completion of actions which depend on third parties
- The DPFS has had meetings with the Head of Catering Operations to discuss specific issues regarding h-bar

##### Union Goal 3: London Living Wage – **In progress**

- As we (DPFS & I) renegotiate the terms of the Union's block grant from College this year, I'm committed to including a real (London) living wage for student staff as part of our costings
- The Union Leadership team has agreed to including this as we go forward.

[union.president@ic.ac.uk](mailto:union.president@ic.ac.uk) | @icu\_president | 020 7594 8060 | IC ext: 58061