

Deputy President (Welfare) – Council report

Shervin Sabeghi – 1st December 2020

Introduction

The last month has been busy, but it's hard to pin-point exactly why. The meeting load has been immense, and training was quite an effort to get done as we had no appropriate content to release beforehand. The development of the Liberation & Community Networks is going more slowly than I hoped – entirely due to my time constraints. The Officers themselves (if you're reading) have been doing an *amazing* job in starting these up from scratch.

How I've spent my time over the last 4 weeks (26th October – 22nd November)

College Meetings and 121s	Union Meetings	Desk work (day-to-day)	Training (volunteers)	Time with students + comms	Recruiting
23%	35%	14%	4%	18%	6%

Key latest updates

- Was on the selection panel for a new Head of the Disability Advisory Service at the College following the retirement of the previous Head in February. Maureen O'Brien has already begun her induction and I'll be picking up projects again that had to be paused in the absence of a Head in February.
- College COVID meetings have been geared primarily towards preparing for the Christmas period and start of term 2 over the last few weeks. Key points:
 - There is a general keenness to not 'shut up shop' and still provide support above what is normally provided over the Christmas period.
 - A plan for Campus Services has been approved which includes the extension of opening times for catering services, Ethos, other campus gyms and the nursery service in SK. It's also included the plan for providing meals to self-isolating students over Christmas which planned for a cold dinner on Christmas day, but we're pushing on this.
 - I've initiated conversations with the College about if/how volunteers could be used over the Christmas period – this is still a work in progress though pending a response from the College.
- Had the second Community and Welfare Board meeting of the year, approved the process to allocate funding to Liberation & Community Networks, and ran a useful consultation session about Union campaigns.
- Continuing to work on OT comms – how's it working? Please let me know if you've got thoughts about how we're communicating to students – have you read the newsletters?
- Continuing to lead an investigation into a club, which takes a lot of time but is revealing interesting that will likely change how the Union supports CSPs.
- Released training to new academic and wellbeing reps with defined online modular content for the first time. We are hoping we can use the online module format to develop training throughout the year, so reps can engage as much as they want.
- Ran a 'How's it going' survey to get some basic data about teaching, wellbeing and halls matters in term 1. The report for this is going to a College meeting (but not ready yet, but can be circulated before the actual Council meeting).

My 2020/21 objectives

After providing the description of these in my [previous Council paper](#), I'll provide updates against my objectives in each report.

1) Liberation and Community (L&C) Development

- Following by-elections, have elected 25/27 LCN committee positions.
- Officers leading on development right now – social media pages and various groups have been established which require more support from the Union.
- This week, working on the systematic development such that students can sign-up more easily and choose to join community groups.
- Coming up: more training for the network officers.

2) Representation Network Review

- Not yet started, awaiting recruitment of Union's new Representation and Advice Manager (which is severely delayed due to the utter incompetence of College's HR).
- However, Michaela has started work on the PG Rep Network review which will also

3) COVID-19 Response

- Ongoing ESOG (Education Strategy and Operation Group) meetings dealing with immediate issues (e.g. student return home) as well as looking into dealing with COVID in term 2.
- Survey to establish how teaching, wellbeing and halls are going and personally working on the response to this.
- Survey to ask about Christmas provision and working on how the Union ups its service over the Christmas period in-light of Christmas.

4) Student Discipline and Harassment

- Not officially started, but working on and being involved in different individual matters is providing early ideas about how the Union can do better in this area.
- Applying pressure on the College to improve their processes, responsiveness and resources in this area. Extra staff time is being invested in the Student Registry partially to address issues here.

5) Campaigns and Student Voice

- Ran a consultation about Union campaigns at the last Community and Welfare Board meeting which helped provide feedback on what the Union has done so far, and ideas about how we should run campaigns, support students with ideas and what areas we should be focusing on.

Congrats if you've read this far! Please feel free to drop me an email whenever at dpwelfare@imperial.ac.uk if you've got any questions or feedback.