

Imperial College Union
Minutes of the sixth ordinary Meetings of Union Council
23rd March 2021 - 12:00pm – 2:00pm

Present:

Role	Name
Union Council Chair	Alex Auyang (AA/Chair)
Union President	Abhijay Sood (AS)
Deputy President (Welfare)	Shervin Sabeghi (SS)
Deputy President (Education)	Michaela Flegrova (MF)
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Ross Unwin (RU)
Deputy President (Finance and Services)	Sam Lee (SL)
BME Officer	Deborah Adegoke (DA)
CGCU President	Hayley Wong (HW)
Ethics and Environment Officer	Stephanie Yeung (SY)
Gender Equality Officer	Priantha Pretheshan (PP)
GSU President	Zixiao Wang (ZW)
GSU PGR Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering)	Abderrahim Boualam (AdB)
ICSMSU President	Muntaha Naeem (MN)
ICSMSU Academic Chair	Rachel Kwok (RK)
ICSMSU Welfare Officer	Natania Varshney (NV)
Interfaith Officer	Safi Thanya Siamwalla (SaS)
International Officer	Isabelle Zhang (IZ)
Knowledge Sector Chair	Alexander Nielsen (AN)
LGBT+ Officer	Keir Logan (KL)
Media Chair	Matej Genci (MG)
RCSU President	Aparna Pillai (AP)
RCSU Vice President (Welfare)	Maria Borc (MB)
Recreation Sector Chair	Adam Turner (AT)
RSMSU President	Jasmine Crocker (JC)
RSMSU Vice President (Education)	Katie McCann (KM)
Sports Sector Chair	Geoffrey Sheir (GS)
UG FoM Council Rep	Haider Nazerali (HZ)
UG FoM Council Rep	Gabrielle Mathews (GM)
UG FoNS Council Rep	Michael Kohn (MK)
UG FoNS Council Rep	Susan Rutter (SR)
UG FoE Council Rep	Hilliam Tung (HT)
UG FoE Council Rep	Olasoji Ajayi (OA)
UG FoE Council Rep	James White (JW)
PG FoNS Council Rep	Ansh Bhatnagar (AnB)
PG FoNS Council Rep	Chiara Riedel-Loria (CR-L)
PG Non-Faculty Council Rep	Luckme Thakkar (LT)

Observers:

Felix Editor	Calum Drysdale (CD)
Governance Officer	Victoria Agbontaen (VA)

Apologies:

Arts and Entertainment Sector Chair	India Marsden (IM)
Mental Health Officer	Lauren Wheeler (LW)
Working Class Officer	Grace Fisher (GF)
RCSU Vice President (Education)	Daniyar Ghani (DG)

Absent:

Community and Faith Sector Chair	Joshua Ofengbai (JO)
Culture Sector Chair	Tin Hang Un (TU)
CGCU Vice President (Wellbeing)	Matthew Scott (MS)
CGCU Vice President (Education)	Aleksander Ziolkowski (AZ)
Disabilities Officer	Adya Rao (AR)
GSU Vice President (Representation)	Lintong Li (LL)
PG FoE Council Rep	Zhongyao Jiang (ZJ)
PG FoE Council Rep	Ravi Shankar (RS)
PG FoM Council Rep	Ebenezer Donkor (ED)
PG FoM Council Rep	Subarna Chakraborty (SC)
PG Non-Faculty Council Rep	Sabrina Lui (SL)
RSMSU Welfare Officer	Emmeline Poole (EP)
Silwood Park President	Conor Nicoll (CN)
UG FoE Council Rep	Varun Srivastava (VS)

Item	Actions
1. Chair's welcome and Chair's business 1.1. Chair welcomed the Council to the fifth 2020-21 Council Meeting.	
2. Apologies: 2.1. Apologies from: India Marsden (IM) Grace Fisher (GF) Lauren Wheeler (LW) Daniyar Ghani (DG)	
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 3.1. Chair confirmed with Council if there were any changes required to be made to the minutes. 3.2. No dissensions were put forward. 3.3. Chair confirmed the minutes as accepted as consensus.	
4. Action Tracker 4.1. SL noted that the timeline for the Redev Project is still tentative and a decision will be made within the next few weeks. 4.2. AAU highlighted that an attendance register was provided and although leniency was granted at the beginning of the year, all Council members should still make an effort to attend the meetings. 4.3. AAU added that to reach quorum only 21 members were required.	SL to provide an update on the Redev Project to Council
Matters for Decision	
5. Membership for Students on Interruption of Studies 5.1. AT gave a brief overview of the paper, highlighting that students on interruption of studies are effectively excluded from being a part of the Union, despite playing an active role in societies and being incredibly committed to these roles. As they were an IoS student, they were not considered members of the Union and its community during this period. 5.2. AT added that the paper is trying to bring an approach whereby the Trustees amend the associate membership policy to prevent the automatic response of students being excluded from the Union. 5.3. AT stated that the Union's automatic response should be that IoS students are still to be considered members of the Union, unless they have opted-out of this and indicate otherwise. 5.4. HT highlighted that associate members are able to join CSP's but cannot vote, stand or hold committee positions and if they were granted associate membership while on an IoS, this would not solve the issue of them being able to stand for positions during IoS. 5.5. AN added that if a student is on IoS but will be a full-time student during the next academic year, it should be considered that these students should be able to run and the Union needs to enable a way for them to stand if they are going to be a member in future years. 5.6. SS said that we naturally hear a lot from students on IoS that still want to engage with the Union and are frustrated because they are unable to. However, we do not hear from those who do not want to engage and want to have that separation from their University life. 5.7. AT added that there could be communication from the Union to students who are on IoS to confirm whether they would like to opt-in or opt-out of being a member while on leave. AT noted this will help students being clear on where their membership stands with the Union.	

<p>5.8. AS noted concerns around the Education Act as well as issues around insurance of students during club activities that we need to be cognisant of.</p> <p>5.9. MN highlighted that there a multitude of reasons as to why a student would go on an interruption and therefore the sort of interactions each student needs from the Union would differ and the opt-in process should be flexible throughout the year.</p> <p>5.10. AS clarified that Council is confident in the principle and would like the Union to take what action it can in the short-term, rather than wait for a College response and will be flexible in the way that this is operationalised.</p> <p>5.11. MF said there should be student consultation with the students this will impact, whether the system will be opt-in or opt-out as they should be informed in this decision-making.</p> <p>5.12. Chair put the paper to members of Council to vote minus resolves one. The results are as follows: 25 approve and 3 abstain. Paper was therefore passed with the amendments by Council.</p>	<p>RU and AS to discuss in detail the IoS issue and confirm with Council if there are different methods of doing this and agree a preferable option.</p>
<p>6. Felix Review Report & Felix Editor Bye-Law Introduction</p> <p>6.1. AS noted that there has been an ongoing review of Felix, this has included focus groups, speaking to previous editors, internal conversations and running a survey and more.</p> <p>6.2. AS added that those who had been a part of the project team agreed that it is important to the include the Felix-Editor role in the byelaws to ensure that Council has full oversight of any major changes to the rule and to reflect the important nature of the role itself.</p> <p>6.3. AB questioned whether the £10,000 savings to the Unions' budget regarding Felix could be ringfenced for reinvestment back into Felix for more resources. AN stated that if these funds are being ring-fenced, it is fair for that to be reinvested to societies as a whole and Felix should apply through the proper processes for that funding back so it can be decided by CSPB.</p> <p>6.4. RU added that ring-fencing is difficult as budgeting is done wholistically for the Union and the block grant received by CSP's changes every year and is dependent on individual financial circumstances of that year. Therefore, it would be problematic for Council to mandate that £10,000 was ring-fenced for Felix.</p> <p>6.5. HW questioned why the Felix Editor is required to respond to a query within two-working days whereas the full-time Officers are required to respond within five days. AS noted that those expectations were mutually agreed by the Felix Editor and the wider Felix Team and it sets into writing what the team can expect from each other while working together.</p> <p>6.6. AS noted that feedback from the Officers and the Felix Committee on potential pitfalls of splitting the role and whether there are other ways the positives could be met.</p>	

<p>6.7. RU suggested the word 'ultimately' be removed from 2.1 of the byelaws and recommended it read, 'responsible for'. As ultimately, it is the Board of Trustees that are responsible for what the Officers of the Union do. CD and AS agreed for this to be removed.</p> <p>6.8. SS suggested that this byelaw should not be placed under the list of Officers of the Union as there is a conflict of interest between the Felix Editor and the Officers who they are supposed to be holding to account, also being an Officer of the Union. SS recommended having the Felix role separate from the other Officers in the Union.</p> <p>6.9. AS noted that this would now go into Section A, under the heading, Felix with a line noting that Felix has a full-time Editor.</p> <p>6.10. Chair put the vote to members of Council on whether the Felix Editor should not be considered an Officer in the Union Byelaws and the results are as follows: 22 approve, 3 abstain and 1 reject. Paper was therefore passed by Council.</p> <p>6.11. Chair put the paper to members of Council to vote minus 2.1 removing the word 'ultimately'. The results are as follows: 25 approve and 3 abstain. Paper was therefore passed with the amendments by Council.</p>	
Matters for Report/Discussion	
<p>7. Felix Report</p> <p>7.1. CD highlighted key points from the report including, completion of the last issue of term 2, being in a much stronger position than term 1 as team morale has drastically improved.</p> <p>7.2. CD noted that the drafting of the Felix Constitution is underway, and the first draft should be circulated to the Committee by next week.</p> <p>7.3. AS thanked CD for his efforts during this term and commended and recognised his hard work in turning things around.</p> <p>7.4. MK questioned what the numbers in the heading of appendix two represent. CD confirmed that this represents the results of the consultation done looking at what students think are the most important sections in the paper.</p> <p>7.5. Chair put the report to members of Council to vote. The results are as follows: 24 approve and 2 abstain.</p> <p>7.6. Paper was approved by Council.</p>	
<p>8. DPE Report</p> <p>8.1. MF noted that she had been working on a number of PG Representation issues with a number of meetings with other Unions about what can be done for PhD students. MF added that Covid-impact statements will be to PhD students for when they submit their thesis to outline what they did not manage to complete due to covid.</p>	

<p>8.2. MF said that there had been mixed feedback from students on the no-detriment package but unfortunately it does not seem like there is much more the College will be willing to do.</p> <p>8.3. MF noted another project is the Chemistry level 4 refurbishment, which is being worked on with the College to repurpose and refurbish the space and how this space can be used.</p> <p>8.4. AN questioned whether the individuals at College handling the mitigating circumstances for students have been updated about the new agreement, as he has experienced issues with staff not being aware of the changes. MF said that the Faculty Managers are aware, but it is likely admin staff are not aware, but this will be flagged with College.</p> <p>8.5. Chair put the report to members of Council to vote. The results are as follows: 23 approve, 1 abstain.</p> <p>8.6. Paper was approved by Council.</p>	
<p>9. DPW Report</p> <p>9.1. SS noted that the Representation team at the Union is slowly being rebuilt and interviews for the Representation Coordinator will be happening in a few weeks and the Representation Manager is starting in May.</p> <p>9.2. SS added that he has been working with the Strategic planning Department of the College to put together a submission to evaluate how the College has done against their access and participation targets for 2019/20.</p> <p>9.3. SS highlighted that he has been focused on mapping out the Union's disciplinary policies and procedures and will provide an update on this to Council in Term 3.</p> <p>9.4. AN noted that CSP culture work has been ongoing with a couple of the Officers and if this would be brought to CSPB. SS said that any changes to CSP disciplinary procedures will go to CSPB for consultation. CSP Culture work is a project relating to inclusive communities, wellbeing support and inclusivity within clubs.</p> <p>9.5. Chair put the report to members of Council to vote. The results are as follows: 24 approve, 1 abstain. Paper was approved by Council.</p>	<p>To provide an update on the disciplinary processes and procedures.</p>
<p>10. DPCS Report</p> <p>10.1. RU noted that the majority of his time has been spent on budgeting with student execs and CSPB. Specifically higher scrutiny of Imperial athletes and how sports clubs spend money.</p> <p>10.2. RU added that the paper highlighted a roadmap out of lockdown for CSP's and what background work has been done to enable these activities to happen. RU also said College have agreed to socially distanced activity within their spaces from the 17th of May.</p> <p>10.3. RU advised that there is some funding available to make improvements to spaces that will be funded by College and requested for Council members to reach out if they have any ideas on how these funds can be spent on spaces in College.</p>	

<p>10.4. Chair put the report to members of Council to vote. The results are as follows: 21 approve and 3 abstain.</p> <p>10.5. Paper was therefore accepted by Council.</p>	
<p>11. DPFS Report</p> <p>11.1. SL noted that applications for the Web-developer role have reopened and once recruited this role with focus solely on improving e-activities and implementing changes approved by Council.</p> <p>11.2. The bars and shops will be reopening on the 12th of April, subject to government guidance, so students have a place to socialise. Re-opening of 568 is being prioritised due to there being only one full-time member of staff in the Commercial team.</p> <p>11.3. SL noted that the Finance and Risk meeting has been postponed but the second group of health and safety policies will be coming to that meeting for approval.</p> <p>11.4. HW questioned whether a CRM system will still be implemented in the Union. SL said that a CRM is a big project to undertake and a lot of what a CRM contains is already available within e-activities and there is no need for a duplication of a system.</p> <p>11.5. AT and HW noted they would like to be involved in any working groups regarding e-activities development in the future.</p> <p>11.6. Chair put the report to members of Council to vote. The results are as follows: 23 approve, 2 abstain.</p> <p>11.7. Paper was therefore accepted by Council.</p>	
<p>12. President Report</p> <p>12.1. AS highlighted that the Felix review has been the main focus of his work the last month but has also been working on halls rent issues including whether waivers will be extended etc.</p> <p>12.2. AS noted that the Chair of College Council is having discussions with College staff about the process of recruiting Alice Gast's successor. AS added that he has requested to be more involved in this process.</p> <p>12.3. AB questioned how much opportunity students will have to consult on the recruitment of Alice Gast's successor. AS asked for those Council members who have any input to contact him directly and he will continue to lobby for student involvement.</p> <p>12.4. AB added that we would not want the successor to be on the Board of an arms or dangerous oil company as this does not align with Imperial's interests.</p> <p>12.5. AN added that the successor should be someone who can demonstrate an understanding in the role of the Union as the Union's voice is not always considered or respected by College. If change happens from the top-down, more institutional respect will be given.</p> <p>12.6. RU noted that the successor should be a candidate that interacts with students and considers student opinions.</p>	

<p>12.7. CD added it would be vital to have a successor that would rethink the balance of the CFO/Provost role – elevating the provost to sit above the CFO.</p> <p>12.8. HW questioned whether Muir Sanderson’s contract will similarly be coming to an end. AS noted that Muir is not on the same terms as Alice but AS felt that he will leave shortly after Alice.</p> <p>12.9. AS added that there is ongoing work regarding the Union’s financial bid to the College. The Union’s aspiration is to have a financial model where the core services (representation, advice etc.) are not reliant on a commercial surplus to function.</p> <p>12.10. Chair put the report to members of Council to vote. The results are as follows: 21 approve. Paper was therefore accepted by Council.</p>	
<p>Any Other Business AAu questioned whether Council were happy to move meetings to the evening (6pm – 8pm) and asked Council to contact him if those timings were not suitable.</p>	