

# Deputy President (Education) October report to Union Council

Daniel Lo

## Updates:

- Presented my written NSS report and recommendations to the Provost Board
- Supported other Union staff during welcome week (e.g. welcome fair and welcome ball)
- Raised my concerns regarding the modification of the Academic Misconduct policy
- Wrote two blog posts about the Autumn Election and vaccination opportunities for students
- Invited by the College to join the panel to review and approve funding opportunities for learning and teaching innovation (Pedagogy Transformation and Digital Innovation Fund)
- Assisted the ICU representation team with promoting the Autumn Election
- Organising and planning for the year rep training week
- Discussed with Alan Spivey, Assistant Provost, to start discussions about how student input could be included within the raising and prioritisation of activities within the Teaching and Learning Product Line.
- Officially graduated and learnt how to use LaTeX (yay!)

## Upcoming:

- Chairing the first Education and Representation Board meeting on 28th Oct.
- Welcome and support the newly elected faculty and departmental academic representatives (reps)
- Conduct initial analysis on postgraduate research experience survey (PRES) results with the Union President and contribute to the PRES task and finish group and PG research quality group
- Deliver the UG year rep training week in November and assist the Graduate school and ICU rep team in delivering PG academic and welfare officers training

## Objectives:

### **Objective 1: Work closely with faculty and departmental (dep) academic reps to ensure departments are actively addressing the issues/feedback raised in the NSS response - [In progress]**

Before officially starting my role as the DPE, I conducted detailed analysis on the NSS 2021 response. As part of this, I developed a departmental breakdown of NSS scores and the themes highlighted in the free-text comments. The rep team and I supported the dep reps in writing their NSS departmental recommendation report. Based on their recommendations and my analysis, I came up with 6 recommendations to the College, focusing on assessment and feedback, community building, workload and welfare support. After submitted my response to the College, I sent dep rep's reports to the Vice Deans (Education), Director of UG studies (DUGs) and Head of Departments (HoDs).

As the departmental staff-student committees (SSCs) and student-staff liaison groups (SSLGs) are happening very soon, I will ensure the dep reps are supported and are confident to bring their recommendations to the DUGs/HoDs. Departmental staff and faculty/dep reps will work together to create actionable, measurable and timely plans. The ICU will monitor the progress and implementation of these throughout the year.

### **Objective 2: Providing support on development training for reps and foster the sharing of good practice across different departments - [In progress]**

In addition to training sessions delivered to the departmental reps regarding the NSS, I collaborated with DPW and ICU representation team to deliver rep training sessions for faculty/dept reps (late Sept, online) and developing training for the year reps (mid Nov, in-person). Besides focusing on the responsibilities of their roles, I have added additional materials which focuses on soft skills and personal development. It is exciting for me to deliver in-person rep training (and socials) for over 300 people, and I am trying to make it as interactive as possible so they can get the most out of it. I will also create more cross-departmental interaction by sharing good practice. This will be through the introduction of more socials, piloting a buddy scheme for reps in different departments, and championing good practice which exists in a department or faculty to the rest of the reps.

### **Objective 3: Work closely with PG AWOs to ensure the departments are actively addressing the recommendations raised in the PRES response - [In progress]**

The approach with this objective is similar to NSS, except it focuses on postgraduate research students. We have received PRES result data and text comments in mid-October. This project

will take around 3 or 4 months to analyse data and text comments, extraction of recurring themes, organise focus groups for student consultation, development of recommendations, and writing the ICU PRES response. Similarly, I will be presenting them in various College meetings.

Although PG taught students are not surveyed this year, I work with the representation team to analyse the PGT results of the Student Experience Survey (SES) to help support us in the development of any recommendations for this cohort.

#### **Objective 4: Review the Mums and Dads scheme to investigate what the right cause of action is - [In progress]**

The ICU has run 'mums and dads' buddy scheme for a couple of years to support community cohesion and transition for first-year students ('children') by pairing them with current students on their course ('parents'). Owing to staffing changes within the ICU and a later timeline of activity, department societies ran the schemes independently. The purpose of this review is to investigate whether the scheme supports student academic attainment, continuation at the College, and mental health. Student consultations will occur in the next half a year, and I will update the result of the review in April 2022.

I have written the Project Initiation Document for this, which is attached to this report.

#### **Objective 5: Enhance the Imperial experience for international students to ensure there is parity with home students - [Not yet started]**

As an international student at Imperial, I know first-hand the challenges that my community faces, both in terms of their academic experience and also their ability to access College services effectively. I am working to develop a project plan to understand and lobby for improvements for this cohort. This may include plans to:

- Work with departments and the Union Advice Centre to understand issues which particularly impact international students (e.g. plagiarism).
- Work with the Careers Service to introduce a Careers fair featuring employers which sponsor international graduate visas.
- Work with International Student Support team and the Student Hub to ensure that support services are accessible and well signposted to international students.

Thanks for reading! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at [dpe@ic.ac.uk](mailto:dpe@ic.ac.uk) or drop me a message on Teams:)