

# OUSU

## reports to council

*1<sup>st</sup> week michaelmas term 2010*

**Joseph Wales**  
**Returning Officer**

**Chair of Council &**

Welcome to the first Council of Michaelmas Term. I hope that this experience will motivate you to get involved in OUSU, particularly as we look to the annual elections later this term. You can also get involved by standing in an election-in-council, and there will be a wide variety of posts coming up this term.

I will try to explain how Council works as we go through this meeting, but if at any point you don't understand why something is (or isn't) happening, or you would like to know how to do something, put your hand up and say "Point of Order".

If you would like to speak about a motion, or to ask a question, put your hand up, and I'll try to get round to everyone at least once. When it's your turn to speak, you should say your name and College first, and then say your bit. Speeches are generally limited to three minutes, and I'll ask you to wind up your remarks if you go on too long.

Points of Order are questions to the Chair, or motions, that deal with the way the meeting is run. For example, if you think that there has been enough debate about a motion, you can propose that the meeting votes on the motion by proposing that the meeting "Move to Vote".

### **Report**

Over the summer, I have met with a variety of people, including the Publications Officer, the Acting General Manager, Madeline Stanley (Returning Officer MT2008 and others, DRO MT2007 etc.), the manager of this term's designated print shop and Mi-Voice. I have also rewritten large parts of the electoral regulations and updated the Junior Tribunal shortlist, both of which will be discussed at today's meeting.

I would ask any agents for potential slates or candidates to talk to me prior to the opening of nominations, either after this Council, or after third week Council.

I will not be seeking re-election at the end of this term for either of the posts I currently hold. If you think that you would be interested in standing for either Chair of Council or Returning Officer, do come and speak to me after Council. I would also say that being a Deputy Returning Officer is good experience for both roles, and would encourage candidates to seriously consider standing as a DRO this term.

Joseph Wales  
Chair of Council & Returning Officer

**David Barclay**

**President**

Hello Council. It has been a privilege to start working for OUSU this summer and I look forward to what will be a hugely important year, both for OUSU as an organisation and for Oxford University in a time of unprecedented financial uncertainty.

Here's a snapshot of what I've been up to over the summer:

- Agreed with Exam Schools plans to allow students to have water bottles in exams.
- Met 21 JCR and MCR Presidents one-on-one to discuss OUSU's priorities for the coming year and their plans for their common rooms.

*reports to 1<sup>st</sup> week council michaelmas term 2010*

- Laid the foundations for the Housing Fair to take place at the end of this term.
- Delivered 1 training session to JCR Presidents in conjunction with the NUS.
- Represented students at three University Council meetings and two General Purposes Committee meetings, helping to successfully see through OUSU's governance changes.
- Met one-on-one with every member of the University's senior management team to discuss OUSU's priorities and student representation within the University structures. Also met with a number of University Council members and the Conference of Colleges leadership.
- Met with the MPs of both Oxford East and West, and Nicola Blackwood's policy adviser in Westminster, to discuss Higher Education Funding.
- Assembled nominations committee and began advertising for external trustee positions for OUSU's first ever Trustee Board.
- Gave speeches about OUSU to 14 college's fresher intakes.
- Released 2 press releases, 2 comment pieces, 1 radio and 1 television interview on the issue of tuition fees and the graduate tax.
- Led on drawing up a job description and advertising the position of Chief Executive of OUSU.
- Negotiated contracts on the OCCH and with Varsity Events and the Oxford Union.
- Met with the Careers Service to discuss plans to help students access part-time work in Oxford.
- Began planning and mobilising students towards the Fund our Future national demonstration on November 10th.

<b>Katharine Terrell (Women)</b>	<b>V-P</b>
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Summer is a time for planning for the year ahead, so a lot of what I have been doing is setting groundwork. There's also been lots of other less interesting 'house-keeping'-type activities – ask me if you want to know, I work for you!

### **Springboard**

- Written a paper for Standing Committee of Senior Tutors' Committee to be sent out to colleges requesting that they contribute to funding Springboard for Undergraduates, a personal and professional development programme for women.

### **Night Safety**

- Attended Safety Bus training and worked with Daniel on plans to get more Safety Bus drivers and users from Oxford University (look at our shiny new posters in colleges!).

### **Autonomous Campaigns**

- With Yuan, contributed to, written and printed a zine for WomCam/Gender Campaign, which was distributed at freshers' fair and will be given out to people who come to either group.

### **Student Advice Service**

- Dealt with information requests from students;
- With the student advisor, started planning training on relationship abuse awareness for welfare staff in colleges.

### **Careers events**

- Met with careers service, OxWiP and OxWiB to discuss plans to hold joint events in Michaelmas, such as work/life balance talks;

### **Big events**

- With Oxford Feminist Network, planned Reclaim the Night, a march to take place in second week to bring attention to violence against women and stand up to it in all its forms, helped organise the Reclaim the Night launch party, raising money for Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre, been in contact with other HE/FE institutions to invite them to RTN and get them involved;
- attended a conference on women's education in a global context at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, USA.

### **Working with colleges, CRs, other SUs, NUS etc.**

- Met with Women's Officers to help them with planning the term ahead

- Met my counterpart in Cambridge to discuss possible joint Oxbridge campaigns and share best practice/advice and via NUS, met with all the full-time SU women's officers (there are only 6 of us in the country) to discuss best practise, wider issues and how we can help each other;

### **Student parents**

- Started planning an introduction for student parents in third week and "tea and toys", regular meet-ups for student parents.

### **Eating disorders**

- Worked with Student-Run Self Help, moving the responsibility for information, resources and support for students with eating disorders away from VP (Women)

<b>Beth Evans (Graduates)</b>	<b>V-P</b>
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Council Report, for Michaelmas 1<sup>st</sup> Week Council – Beth Evans, Vice President (Graduates)

- Handover – two weeks (intense) handover with last year's sabbatical team, particularly working with last year's VP (Grads) Sarah Hutchinson.
- Attended two University Councils with Alex and David.
- Set up drop-in sessions for Mature Students and early-arrivers with Anne Jacobs from Student Admin. These were run over two weeks and saw over 60 students attend at Exam schools. Plans for a drinks reception for Mature Students later in term.
- Set up voluntary Mock Exams for Graduates with Den Moore – to be held at the end of Michaelmas as a pilot.
- Work as a part of the Student Advice Service – depending on the amount of casework, this can take up a lot of work hours. Further work for the Student Advice Service included meeting with the Junior Proctor to discuss appeals procedures for students and carrying out research on Council Tax liability for graduate students.
- Wrote a number of reviews for the Oxford Handbook, given out in Freshers' packs.
- Discussed the effectiveness of the Graduate Supervision System with Student Admin and MCR presidents – I will be taking part in the working group to improve the GSS, hopefully making it more widely used by graduates. Feedback from focus group of Grad Students useful in identifying problems.
- Responded to the comments on International Student visas by Immigration minister Damian Green (Con).
- Met with the founder of OxGradHousing run via groupspaces and facebook groups. Discussed integrating the project with OUSU and how to get information out to graduate students.
- Discussed provisions for International students with Loren Griffiths, acting head of International Strategy at the University.
- Took part in training for sabbatical officers by NUS regional rep, Mel Lonsdale.
- Took part in training at NUS headquarters for my role on NUS LGBT Campaign committee. Through this role I met with the Equality and Diversity Unit and will be working with them on their website.
- Attended the 'Understanding Liberation' conference in Leicester with Tom Perry – took part in workshops with the leaders of the four NUS liberation campaigns.
- Meetings with MCR Presidents to discuss working with OUSU and individual common room issues.
- Meetings with Heads of Divisions to discuss feedback from students and issues within divisions.
- Work on the NUS and UCU 'Fund our Future' campaign – attended Road to the National Demo with David, set up the facebook group 'Oxford Fund our Future' for OBSU, OUSU and Ruskin to work together in organising for the demonstration.
- Meeting with Careers Service on specific careers advice for Masters Students.
- Took part in Safety Bus training at Oxford Brookes Student Union.
- Presented to University staff on OUSU and the work we do at the University Administration Service conference.
- PGCE Orientation – delivered a presentation to incoming PGCE students on OUSU and life in Oxford.
- Worked on the OUSU stall at the Oxford University open day at Exam schools.
- International Orientation – delivered forty-five minute talks to 200 undergrads and 800 grads in three separate sessions on life in Oxford, OUSU and how to get involved.

- Worked at Freshers' Fair on OUSU stall, as well as OUSU campaign stalls (mature students, LGBTQ campaign).
- Delivered a number of talks to freshers in MCRS during Freshers' Week, introducing students to OUSU, the services we provide and how they can get involved.

<b>Tom Perry Opportunities)</b>	<b>V-P (Welfare &amp; Equal</b>
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The summer involved a lot of training and catching up on projects started by my predecessor Dani. Here is a brief overview of my summer, please come and ask me any questions or if you want more information on anything laid out below.

### **Training**

- Attended various training days/conferences by the NUS: Regional Conference; Understanding Liberation; Delivering Change; Trustee Academy; In-House Training
- Attended sessions by the OLI on team profiles, line management (for the Student Advice Service) and training
- Ran Freshers' Week training for 15 JCR/MCR members
- Ran Student Support training for 17 JCR/MCR members
- Organising 'Advocacy Training' with Alex which will happen later in the term
- Organising 'Cultural Awareness Training' with the EDU, which will hopefully be in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> week
- Working with Katharine on Equal Opportunities training for Equal Opps and Women's officers.

### **Student Advice Service**

- Managed the Student Advice Service that has handled/is handling over 60 cases. There were only 154 cases in the whole of last year. I've personally dealt with 20 of these cases and overseen work on most of the rest.
- The Student Advice Service has also dealt with over 80 information requests during the summer (last year there were just under 200 in total)
- Re-branded the Student Advice Service (come find me if you want posters!)
- Streamlined the Student Advice Service internal procedures
- Contacted every Head Of House about the Student Advice Service to raise our profile with Colleges

### **Equal Opportunities**

- Organised a 'Settling-In Scheme' with the DAS for 12 incoming students with Asperger's Syndrome
- Worked with the EDU on a paper for the Race Equality Steering Group on an 'Anonymous Incident Reporting' system. A working group has now been set up to explore the scope of the system.
- Working with the EDU on the Cultural Leaders Programme; a new scheme set up this year to identify, train and support student leaders
- Worked with Danni Fraser Solomon on Disability Awareness Week (3<sup>rd</sup> Week of this term!). Posters are on the way!
- Worked with Taylor to create new publicity material for SWD and CRAE (again, come find me for the funky new leaflets)

### **General OUSU**

- Involved with the recent staff changes as a member of Standing Committee
- Member of OSSL board overseeing the Freshers' Fair, Discount Card and Housing Fair
- Working with other members of the sab and staff team on the new website which will hopefully go live in the New Year!
- Attended a dozen Welfare/Freshers' events during Freshers' Week

<b>Alex Bulfin Affairs)</b>	<b>V-P (Access &amp; Academic</b>
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## **Access**

Building links: I have developed OUSU and Target Schools' links with colleges, the University, and external organisations. I've met with over 20 college access and admissions staff, plus regular liaison with the central admissions team. As a result, OUSU had its own talk at the University's Open Day and our own stall, which will continue in the future. We are also talking to the Social Mobility Foundation and Teach First about how we can work together in the future.

Target Schools restructure: my manifesto pledge to reorganise and embed Target Schools at the centre of University outreach work is progressing. The volunteer database will be up and running this term, and colleges and departments are enthusiastic about using Target Schools as the central point for outreach volunteering in the University.

## **Academic Affairs**

Committees: I have already attended numerous University committees this year, including the University's Council, Education Committee, and Planning and Resource Allocation Committee.

Follow-up to Teaching Review: we are still in the process of following up on the points generated by the Teaching Review OUSU ran last term. There will be further reports on this during term.

Humanities Divisional Review: for the first time OUSU is involved in a review of one of the University's academic divisions (Humanities). This is an important step in making sure student opinions are taken into consideration at the highest levels of academic policy review.

Study Skills: with the Oxford Learning Institute, we are starting a study in the effectiveness of peer-marking/peer-feedback on students' understanding of marking criteria. We are hoping that this will help tackle the persistent problem of a lack of clarity in marking criteria.

## **Student Advice Service**

Exam queries: as a member of the Student Advice Service, I had around 30 exam-related enquiries in the space of two weeks, some of which we are still helping through college and University procedures.

Cases: I've taken on 18 cases for the Student Advice Service over the summer, largely related to academic and disciplinary issues. Many of these cases are ongoing.

Policy: the Student Advice Service also shapes OUSU's policy on a range of welfare issues. We are currently lobbying the University to undertake a review of its harassment procedures, as well as being involved in the ongoing reviews of college and University complaints and appeals processes.

## **Non-portfolio work**

Website: This year we are aiming to get OUSU's website redeveloped to make a useful tool for OUSU. I have been exploring the options open to OUSU and liaising/negotiating with potential suppliers, as well as working with the Exec to establish what we want from the new site.

OUSU Governance: much of the early part of the summer was spent arranging OUSU's registration with the Charity Commission and tying up loose ends from last year's governance reforms. I am working with Nominations Committee and Standing Committee on the search for a new Chief Executive and trustees for the organisation.

<b>Daniel Lowe Community)</b>	<b>V-P (Charities &amp;</b>
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Hi Council,

Welcome back to old hats and welcome to those of you attending your first council. Summer's been busy so you're only getting the York Notes here. If you want to know more about anything just ask in council or email me [charities@ousu.org](mailto:charities@ousu.org)

**Charities and RAG:** The RAG committee have been on the pulse so I've only stepped in when really needed or had to exercise the authority of being VP.

Over the summer I:

- Attended national RAG conference at Kent Uni and got great ideas and advice for the year to come.
- Gained nearly £2500 sponsorship from Accenture and The Big Bang
- Oversaw RAG Ball plans. Its going to be on **Saturday of 6<sup>th</sup> week**. Its going to be awesome. [www.ragball2010.co.uk](http://www.ragball2010.co.uk)
- Gave info to more than 50 charities wanting to work with Oxford Students

**Community:** This area has exploded with work over the summer.

- I now attend 4 community neighbourhood action groups and two area committees across the city representing your interests and views on crime, safety, parking, planning and other community issues
- I was invited to the Council Scrutiny committee but couldn't attend due to illness.
- Presented the Night Safety report from last Trinity and received approval from a county councillor to better light dark streets such as Queens' Lane and Iffley Road.
- Began the Safety Bus for the term with Brookes SU – remember 0771 444 5050 to get home for £1 9pm-3am (I am Sundays)
- I worked with the NUS and Kent Uni to reverse the law allowing Oxford to new student houses in OX4. SUCCESS!! They'll try again soon through a loophole but we'll be ready.

**Environment and Ethics** I was selected to attend a free weekend training session in Berlin as a leading campaigner to represent the UK at a pan-European conference.

- A 10:10 event was organised by the E&E committee doing conservation work last Sunday.
- The Fairtrade foundation have decided not to award us Fairtrade status as they 'don't do student unions' but we will come under the University's status if/when (hopefully when) they gain it.
- I wrote an Environment and Ethical policy for OUSU which will come to council in 3<sup>rd</sup> Week
- I'm currently writing resource packs for common room reps and campaigners

**Big Brother Big Sister** - OUSU's mentoring scheme for fostered or children in care will triple in size this year after I made a ambitious funding bid. If you are interested in mentoring a 14-17 year old from Oxfordshire, including a 2-3 day residential programme in the Easter Vac email [bbbs@ousu.org](mailto:bbbs@ousu.org)

## PART TIME OFFICERS

<b>Nathan Jones</b> <b>Officer</b>	<b>Access &amp; Admissions</b>
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"I have continued working with the North-West over the summer to discuss the establishment of a 'Fred Walker Essay Prize'. Over the vac, I visited the school which will co-ordinate the awards in the region, as well as meeting with the University's Head of Student Recruitment, and with tutors interested in the scheme. An organisation Committee is being set up, and linked Colleges are being spoken to about taking the Prize forward. If you have any further questions or ideas about getting this Prize going, then please drop me an email. Thoughts welcomed particularly from students who have attended schools in the North-West, or those who come from that part of the world!"

<b>Hannah Cusworth</b> <b>Campaign Officer</b>	<b>Academic</b>	<b>Affairs</b>
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Hiya Council,

Since we last met I have mostly been doing a bit of a mixture of things really:

**Handover with Alex**- meeting up with him and Jonny to evaluate where we had got to with certain projects and plan Michaelmas term

**Tutor training**- I produced a 'What is a good tutorial' guide for new tutors and the university is using the Teaching Review in their training.

**Representing OUSU**- at the university-wide open day, at an access event held by the Social Mobility Foundation in London and at Freshers' Fair

**Common Room Support**- following up with JCR presidents about their progress in their common rooms on certain academic affairs projects- peer marking most notably

Standing for election for the Nomination's Committee and **contributing to the criteria against which OUSU's external trustees will be judged**

Working with Alex on how to push forward the **peer-marking** project by trying a new approach and working with the OLI to design a pilot

**Jack Matthews  
Officer**

**Common Room Support**

Hi Council

I hope you are all well and had a great summer vacation.

Over the holidays I have been doing the following:

- Writing my two handover documents (CRSO and CSSO)
- Working on the Common Room Information Service and trying to update it
- Working on the Oxford Handbook
- Providing support to new Clubs and Societies
- Arranging Common Room visits by OUSU Officers

I also had an impromptu meeting with some student officers at the SU at Memorial University in Newfoundland, we have a lot to learn from each other!

Things I need to do more work on (that I probably should have done more on over the summer);

- Sky TV campaign
- Speaking to Stagecoach regarding a student discount on buses within Oxford.
- Supporting Common Rooms with Charities Act stuff.

If you have any questions, ask away!

Jack Matthews  
Common Room Support Officer  
commonrooms@ousu.org

**Genevieve Laurier  
Charities Officer**

**Community Outreach &**

Hello council,

Over the summer I have been looking into quite a few things that will hopefully blossom now that term has started. Here are some of the main things that are going on:

- The Jebb table is being updated to reflect involvement in community volunteering in Trinity. Although not every project has been able to send in their details, already it is obvious that the total number of students involved that term was very impressive. Through the process of updating the table, many

community volunteering projects were brought to my attention that I was previously unaware of. A complete list of community volunteering projects in Oxford and contact details for their coordinators is being put together.

- Time for Change, an auction in which students are able to bid hours of community volunteering in exchange for prizes donated by local businesses, societies, and individuals, will be back this term. The auction was launched last year and raised several hundred hours of community volunteering. This year there are hopes that it will be bigger and better than ever so watch for that.
- This year societies are going to be asked to get involved in the 100 Challenge. The challenge will be to get as close to 100% of the members of your society to complete one hour of community volunteering or raise 10 pounds for charity this year. There will be awards for the society that gets the most people involved and for societies that reach the 100% mark. If you would like for your society to get involved, email [charityandcommunity@ousu.org](mailto:charityandcommunity@ousu.org). The sooner you sign up the more time you have to work on it!

As always, if you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to get in touch.