

OUSU

reports to council

3rd week hilary term 2009

Lewis Iwu

President

Dear all,

Welcome to third week council, a few notices

Timing of Council

On talking to various students of different faiths I believed that given the situation that occurred in last council it would be fair to make council slightly earlier to ensure that as many people as possible could attend and take part in the discussion.

Central Student Venue Working Group

This group met again last week to discuss the opportunities that could arise for societies in a central student venue. In what was a positive and engaging session the group felt that there was scope for providing major benefits to University Societies. The full report of the group will be made at the end of this term

Aldwych

I attended the Aldwych Group meeting in Warwick last week. The Aldwych group is made up of representatives from the Russell Group Student Unions. On the agenda were rent and also teaching and learning space.

Lewis Iwu

Rosanna McBeath

V-P (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)

Hello all!

I hope you are all having a fantastic term! It has been a busy couple of weeks! Here is an up date of everything that's been happening.

On Monday, we had a great talk on breast cancer awareness that was organised by Sarah Hutchinson. Thanks so much Sarah, it was a great event and really informative!

On Tuesday we had our first new training session for common room officers. In this session we did a quick overview of listening skills. We had a good turnout, and I hope to see even more people, especially common room presidents at our next listening skills workshop. This Tuesday we had a workshop covering casework. This covered everything from how to keep case notes and how to draft a confidentiality policy. Next week we will be covering resources.

Tuesday was also the first Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality meeting of term of this term. We are looking into university complaints procedures. If you are interested in getting involved in the campaign, please send me an email and I will get your name on our mailing list

On last Thursday we had our first Welfare officer meeting of term. We decided to look in to drink safety awareness. We're hoping to organise a drink safety workshop and are looking into providing bottle tops and testing kits. We are still waiting on quotes from condom manufacturers; as soon as these come through I will let you all know! I will be looking into setting up a working group examining college welfare provision. If anyone is interested please let me know!

On Friday all of the sabs attended a Sexual Violence Awareness Workshop set up by Rachel. It was great, had a lot of useful information. Thank you so much Rachel for organising it!

This Thursday was our first equal opps officers meeting. Since I'm writing this before we meet, I'll let you know how it went in my oral report.

Next Wednesday will be the first meeting of the newly resurrected Students with Disabilities campaign. It will be at 2pm on Wednesday, Venue TBC. I will send out the location as soon as I've managed to secure it!

This week is the Disability Equality Scheme Working party. I will also be meeting with Anne Grocock to discuss the university's current reassessment of fitness to practice policies.

Last week I met with Keith Zimmerman, the Director of Student Administration and Service. The university has tentatively agreed to start printing useful phone numbers on the back of newly issued student bod cards. This would begin from Easter. The numbers on the back of the cards will be Nightline, NHS Direct, and the Thames Valley Non-emergency number. I will let you know as soon as this is confirmed!

Hope you all have a great 4th week!

All the best,
Rosanna

Rachel Cummings

V-P (Women)

Events and issues I've been working on since last council:

1) The **Sexual Violence Awareness Workshop** took place on Friday 30th Jan. A really good session, with 50 confirmed attendees, 3 speakers and representatives from Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre. **Handouts** from the session cover the basic concepts (consent, effects, definition, legislation) and I've been distributing them to people who couldn't make it, women's officers/welfare officers and anyone else who's interested (get one! email me! women@ousu.org). Another outcome of the session- the police are going to supply us with lots of **Early Evidence Kits** (to collect evidence if someone has been assaulted) to distribute to common rooms. (get one of these too- all free, email me).

2) Also, from working with the council on domestic abuse, we're organising for Lisa our Student Advisor to train as one of the County Council's **Domestic Abuse Champions**. This involves a day and a half of initial training and then updates throughout the year, which will make her OUSU's domestic abuse expert, able to do risk assessments, spot warning signals and be aware of criminal justice proceedings and current legislation (most useful within the Student Advice Service).

3) I've also been working on the **OUSU Women Report 2009**, researching this week sections on OUSU's history of women's involvement, Common Room Officer statistics, welfare provision in colleges and have submitted a Freedom of Information request to the Thames Valley Police for a number of crime statistics broken down by gender.

4) I met with Elaine Gelman (president of Atalantas, female sports club) to discuss **women in sport** in Oxford. This is partly to inform a women in sport section for the report, but also to establish how OUSU can support Atalantas better. We discussed coverage of women's sports in student papers and facilitating sponsorship requests from women's clubs among other things. I will be following this up with further research through The Sports Federation.

5) **Publicity Committee** (to which I was elected and have responsibility for among the sabs) had it's first few meetings and is proving effective. The group have designed a series of posters publicising OUSU's achievements which should be up in your common rooms by now. Have a look, point them out to people and get in touch if you want more (or want to be on PubCom, there are two free spaces).

6) The first **Women's Officers meeting** of term was held on Thursday, 4-5pm (but I'm writing this on Tuesday so can't say how it was). If any of your women's officers or female welfare officers don't know about these meetings please mention them and encourage them to attend- odd weeks on Thursday afternoons. (On that note, this week I also had my termly **meeting with Felicity Cooke**, head of Equality and Diversity Unit and Jenny Huxley, Childcare Officer, but that was after I wrote this).

7) On Wednesday 2nd week I attended a Univ session on **encouraging women to get involved in the JCR** set up by their Women's Officer and First Year Rep. I spoke on what OUSU has to offer in terms of supporting women and JCR officers in general. It was a good discussion and I've sent the plan for the meeting round to other Women's Officers who might want to run similar sessions.

8) I'm currently organising **Finals Forums** for female finalists, across a range of subjects. These follow on from and will be similar in format to the women-only Study Skills Sessions mainly for freshers in Michaelmas. I have a number of tutors who have been suggested, but if you have any ideas (particularly for female science tutors) please let me know, tell me after council or email women@ousu.org.

9) **WomCam** is brilliant as always. We'll be having our open-meeting for the term (to which men are very welcome) on Monday 5th week, 5:45pm in OUSU, come along. We elected three **new committee members** (Alice Heath, Kate Pattel, Lizzy Bauer) and are currently planning a **clothes swap**, a talk from a **female GP**, and a discussion on dealing with **disordered eating** (as part of our 'Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds' theme for the term). WomCam's **feminist book group** is still going strong- 5pm on Tuesdays of even weeks, to which everyone is welcome, in Borders. Last term's **Women In Film** sessions have transformed into Sex and The Cinema and take place on Wednesdays at Magdalene, email for more details.

10) Since last council I have also attended: our Breast Cancer Awareness Session, Tea and Toys (the student parent event), MCR PresCom meeting, Enough! (the support group for disordered eating) and a Wadham SU meeting.

Kaushal Vidyarthee

V-P (Graduates)

University Committees - I've been to many university committees since the last OUSU council. Those are Graduate Admission Committee, PRAC ICT Committee meeting, Education Committee, Institutional Audit Management Board, and Curators of Libraries.

International Students' Campaign - We had a committee meeting where we discussed plans for the rest of term, election of the new committee and proposed discussion with the Director of International Strategy. The committee decided to shift the date of International Festival to the second week of Trinity Term.

Mature Students' Campaign – The committee will meet in fourth week.

Student Advice Service - I've had few case-works relating to graduate academic life. Moreover, I am compiling a resource document for complaint and appeals procedures.

Common Rooms - MCR president's committee had its first meeting of the term on Tuesday. Issues relating to opening hours of college libraries, services by the University club and, support from college advisors across colleges were discussed.

Postgraduate Assembly - The PGA review group will be meeting in fourth week.

Paul Dwyer

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

As the last two weeks flew by in a daze of meetings, I started to give a little thought as to what I would put into my council report for 3rd week council, and shed a little tear that I only have 6 more OUSU councils to look forward to. (Ok, the last bit might be a lie, but the sentiment is still there somewhere.) Term is starting to gather pace now, which I can see by the pile of agendas steadily growing next to me on my desk! There has

been some major headway in certain quarters though, so read on dear reader, and there may even be a treat for your perseverance at the end!

In the weeks since last we met, a number of members of the OUSU executive, as well as representatives from a JCR and MCR met with the members of the team who will be auditing the university later on in Hilary term. We talked through a number of the recommendations that we raised in our Student Written Submission, whilst also raising issues that we thought were particularly relevant to the academic life of students at the university. These issues included academic discipline, college inequality, as well as provisions made to support graduate students. If anyone would like a more comprehensive run down of the meeting, or would like to know what will happen from this point, then please let me know and I shall regale you with tales of our heroics.

I have sat on a number of committees and panels in the past fortnight. The most important of these were the undergraduate panel and a meeting of the Education Committee. A number of issues were raised in these meetings, the most important of which included students' rights to access university and college facilities if they are to suspend their status (there was a useful discussion, and there will be more to follow), the use of resits in the university, and feedback for students who fail their First Public Examination. The result of the latter of these issues is that I have been invited to take a paper to the 4th week meeting of Education Committee concerning whether students should be allowed feedback should they fail, and whether this might be in the form of receiving back their exam scripts. There is a long way to go, and no promises can be made, but there is a glimmer of hope to be taken from the fact that the university are willing to consider a paper to this effect! If anyone has any thoughts or comments on what should be included in the paper, then please do let me know.

The most exciting development of the week has been the Target Schools Shadowing Scheme. By the time you are reading this (or at least put it at your feet and pretended to have glanced through it!), the first week of the scheme will have been all but completed. We originally aimed to have 50 students in Oxford over the course of the week, but Mother Nature soon saw to it that this was not to be the case. A brave few students battled through treacherous conditions at the beginning of the week (claims that one of them left their house in Surrey claiming "I may be gone some time" were unfounded), but we are having to reschedule a number of days for students for the 6th week session. The aim of the scheme is to encourage students from schools who do not traditionally apply to Oxford to come along for a day and see what a day in the life of an Undergraduate is like. They will attend lectures and tutorials, as well as sessions on interviews and personal statements, in the hope that they might be a little more likely to consider making an application come October. Target Schools is indeed awesome.

That about wraps up the main bulk of my business. If anyone has any questions about what I am up to, or would like a signed photograph of my in my OUSU hoodie, then feel free to drop me an email at access@ousu.org.

For all those who I promised a treat at the end of the report...I lied I'm afraid. But at least you can go away with a warm and fuzzy feeling inside, safe in the knowledge that OUSU is doing good work left right and centre. And if it isn't, then blame Jack.

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| Jack Wellby | V-P (Charities & Community) |
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Hello! Sorry I can't be at council today – I'm sure you'll be having lively debate. Here's an update on what I've been up to over the last two weeks:

- Launched the RAG event LOST, which is taking up quite a bit of time administratively but is going well.
- We had a RAG collection for Diabetes UK in Oxford City Centre where we had over 20 volunteer students and collected nearly £1300 for the good cause.
- Met with the university Environment Panel, important points include:
 - There will be a series of four lectures on Energy, Science and Climate Change to which all undergraduate students will be invited.
 - We are looking into combining resources between colleges and the university for quality 'bags for life'.
 - We had a lengthy discussion about Fair Trade and the university is committed to the principle but not to becoming registered as a Fairtrade university for good reasons.

- The proposed pedestrianisation of the city centre has not reached formal consultation yet but when it does I'll let you know.
- Good news! The university has promised that the Exam Regulations booklet will no longer be sent out to everyone – people will have to request a copy if they want one and it will be available online.
- The cycle path off South Parks road is the responsibility of the county council and as they plan to extend the path they will also improve lighting on the path.
- I met with Caroline from Christian AID and we are looking into how she can work with college reps and the Environment and Ethics Committee.
- The Beyond Profit Careers Fair is on February the 14th and the booklet is now finished and is being printed.
- I attended the OxHUB steering group meeting representing RAG and E&E.
- I had an interview with Ben Williams for the University podcasts about charity development in Oxford,
- RAG is coming on very well and preparations for RAG week are exciting – watch this space!! RAG week will be 5th week.
- I'm in Israel until Wednesday – I will report on my trip on my return.

As always if you have any questions or want clarification on any of the above please email me.

You see things; and you say 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say 'Why not?' George Bernard Shaw

PART TIME OFFICERS

Daniel Lowe

Environment and Ethics Officer

Hi Council,

This is my first report in a while, what with my usual excuses for not wasting ink and paper, but I miss writing them so here's a short one.

Recycling: Oxford City Council is now offering plastic bottle and cardboard recycling to the colleges. Most have already taken up the scheme, but if you're wondering why you still can't recycle that box or bottle FIND OUT. If your bursar says they won't pay extra, THEY ARE JUST MEAN. Besides, it costs less to collect recycling than landfill waste, so also they're WRONG.

Energy: Did you know St Anne's has solar panels? I didn't, now we all do.

Ethics: The Socially Responsible Investment policy of the university has been silent since the regulations of forming a committee were drawn up in March 2008. Seeing as I'm on that committee, I don't think it's met. Time for some investigating what's going on there, especially with regard to the Senior Proctor's promise to check if the University is living up to its policy. Right now, I don't think it has one...

Conservation: The E&E committee ran a letter writing campaign against unsustainable palm oil last term. So far we've had non committal responses from Uni Lever (who make EVERYTHING, from Ben & Jerry's to surf Washing Powder) and a promise from Sainsbury's to phase out unsustainable palm oil from their own brand products and to list it as a separate ingredient from vegetable oil. GO TEAM!

Green and Friendly Love,

Daniel

Elena Lynch

Access and Admissions Officer

Dear Council,

Sorry I can't be here today. It's been a busy week for access in Oxford and the Target Schools committee with our new shadowing scheme kicking off. We were meant to have had 50 sixth form students come and visit us this week, and so far a large proportion have turned up, but of course due to the snow, we've also had quite a few cancellations.

It has so far been a success though, and we've had some very positive feedback. We'll be holding our 2nd shadowing week in 6th week of this term. Target Schools school visit training will be starting later in the term. Please tell all your Common Rooms about us and encourage them to get involved.

I'd like to start meeting with Access reps in Common Rooms soon to see how we can help you with any problems you might be having on the access front and see how we can together improve access in Oxford. If your Common Room rep would particularly like a meeting please tell them to get in touch!"

Thanks Elena