

Reports to Council

3rd Week Council Hilary Term 2017

Jack	Hampton	President	Received
Sandy	Downs	VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities	Received
Orla	White	VP Women	Received
Marina	Lambrakis	VP Graduates	Received
Eden	Bailey	VP Access & Academic Affairs	Received
Beth	Currie	VP Charities & Community	Received

Sabbatical Officers

Jack Hampton – President

Hi council I hope you are all catching the elections fever and soaking up the torrent of new ideas about OUSU streaming in from our candidates!

Unsurprisingly in the last week I have been working with our elections committee around the organisation of the elections and meeting with those candidates that want to talk though my job or working at the SU generally.

Apart from that the majority of my time has been spent on training students. Last week kicked off with training for candidates for which I wrote a session on public speaking, including sections on writing and delivering speeches, fielding and answering questions and speaking to camera. The winter training conference for student leaders was this past Sunday and saw 70 students being trained. As part of this I delivered two sessions on leadership skills (handling difficult conversations and handling conflict). Since then I have started delivering rent negotiation training for common rooms starting with 18 students last night. Hopefully this training will give them a few strategies and skills to approach negotiations with their bursars as equals.

So, that's all the exciting stuff I've been doing, there's also been committees and other daily business stuff but who wants to dwell on that anyway?

Jack

Eden Bailey – Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs)

Hi Council,

As ever it has been a very busy fortnight, but I think quite a productive one too. Here are some of the things I've been doing, with some bits elaborated on where they relate to longer term OUSU projects and manifesto pledges. If you'd like any more detail on anything, please just ask!

- Improving resources to help course reps lobby for lecture capture in their departments to roll out soon
 - Contact me if you would like access to these!
- Representing students on the Teaching and Learning Panel of the Reviews of Plant Sciences and Zoology
- Meeting with Director of Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach and Head of Equality and Diversity Unit about race and admissions
 - I'm feeling very positive about how seriously this is being taken and will be working with University to set up a forum for BME students to express their views about admissions and feed into reviewing the current processes and policy.
- Wrote a blog post about why Oxford is boycotting the NSS which will be published on the national union site
- Social Sciences Undergrad Reps meeting
- Delivered a session on demystifying university structures at OUSU's Winter Training Conference
- Sent out academic feedback survey for JCRs to use who wish to collect student feedback whilst boycotting the NSS
 - If this is of interest to you or your common room, please do get in touch!

- Spoken with Target Oxbridge about how students here can help their work supporting BME students in applying to Oxford

Committees and other groups I've represented students on:

- Name-Blind Admissions Working Group
 - This group will be making recommendations on Unconscious Bias training for admissions tutors, which was a major pledge in my manifesto, and I'm delighted to see a working group put together around issues of bias at admissions. I'm pushing hard for practical responses and feeling optimistic!
- Education Committee
- Steering Committee for Oxplore, the new digital outreach portal being launched after this year
- Working Group on Feedback
 - OUSU have been pushing for better prelims feedback for years now and work is moving forward. There will be some upcoming pilots in specific subject areas but it looks like it will still be a long time before anything is rolled out across the University.
- Admissions Social Media Forum

Unfortunately no one came to the second focus group on financial support for undergraduate students, but if you have ever received or considered applying for financial support please do contribute your thoughts online >>>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1a68l8FsdYRCaoBPIY9aN5Vmunmwjyu2s3V2R16Tcilk/edit>

I'm really excited to finally be looking at what OUSU can do to support less socio-economically privileged students – whether that be a liberation campaign, or something else. If you're at all interested in contributing to this discussion, please register your interest here>>>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1WZnAnZfieUYGkB4XChJXNRyGo-nVfLOIUHqCzVogcY/edit#responses>

Wishing you a better week than last,

Eden

Beth Currie – Vice-President (Charities & Community)

Hey Council,

If you're interested in running a campaign/being on the OUSU executive board then get in touch because I am looking for someone to chair our Environment Campaign (to oversee the Climate Justice and Food Justice campaigns, the Edible Planting group, and VegSoc) and Community Campaign (to oversee OUSU's homelessness campaign On Your Doorstep and the Living Wage Campaign) – so if you're interested in either role to have questions about them, please do get in touch!

In the last fortnight I've been working on different bits of training – I delivered training on elections campaigning to the candidates for the OUSU elections, managing expectations and self-care to welfare officers, and I am updating the training package we give to E&E officers to hopefully be delivered in 5th week.

I've been doing more work on housing and have met with several student reps and the manager of the Student Advice Service to see what would best work for our students. I'm going to be hopefully meeting

with some people from a variety of letting agents in Oxford to talk over what they think we could most helpfully do to help students as tenants.

Marina and I have started work on our graduate employment project and will be holding a focus group for employed graduates (whether in teaching, junior deanship, or other jobs, internal and external to the university) on Monday of 5th week 6-7pm at OUSU so do come along if you have any thoughts on what your union can do to better support and empower graduate students as employees.

At the moment there are loads of fun things happening with RAG so make sure you sign up for Jailbreak and RAG Blind Date. We had a record number of nominations for the Charity Ballot this year so thank you to everyone who nominated! And make sure you all get your mates to vote for the 4 RAG charities in 4th week (along with all your elected officers #OUSUelects).

I've attended the Conference of Colleges' ICT Steering Committee and the first ever meet up of the Oxford Sustainability Guild (!!)

which was super exciting and there should be lots of good resources for supporting environmental sustainability coming out of that.

Stay cool,

Beth

Marina Lambrakis – Vice-President (Graduates)

Hello Council! January is over and spring beckons – we just have to get through February first. I've been up to quite a lot in the last couple of weeks, but before I get into all that, let's all address the sizeable grey mammal in the room...

NO ONE RAN FOR MY JOB.

First I was sad. Then I got angry. Despite all my efforts this year, and Nick's last year, we're still not getting the word out to half the student body about what we do. I'm not going to go into lots of detail here, but I've had many discussions within OUSU's walls and outside it about this, and we have a plan. This is simply not good enough any more. There's going to be a by-election for VP (Graduates), so spread the word. If you know of someone you think would be great, tell them so. If you're interested, come and talk to me. If you want to be involved in what I'm going to call The Graduate Project™, get in touch. Or if you just have comments/ideas/want to vent about something, send it all my way. You can reach me on vpgraduates@ousu.ox.ac.uk, on Twitter @OUSU_Grads, on Facebook (search OUSU VP Graduates), or by good old-fashioned pigeon(hole) post at the OUSU offices on 2 Worcester St.

In other news, here are some of the things I've been up to:

Training

For elections I ran a training session on who OUSU are and what we do (cleverly titled 'OUS-who???' – I'm very proud of that one). I also delivered a very well-attended session on Writing &

Presenting Papers for the Winter Training Conference on Sunday – thanks to everyone who came along, asked questions, and gave me feedback afterwards.

PGR Review

Excitingly we're just getting to the end of the prep stage of the PGR Review! The survey is almost there and will be going out for circulation by the end of this week. We're in the process of setting up focus groups – if you would like one in your department or Common Room, drop me a line and we can get one set up. It's really important to get as much qualitative feedback as possible, to strengthen any recommendations we make to the University about the experience of postgrad research students can be improved.

PG Academic Affairs

I've been coordinating with relevant people in the Uni administration about how we can contribute most effectively to the University's quality assurance processes, internal and external (basically how standards and quality of provision at Oxford are monitored, assessed, and maintained). The QA process has changed substantially in the last few months, and I've been working closely to ensure that the student voice is clearly accounted for in the new Annual Provider Review framework that HEFCE have introduced – we're going to recalibrate our Annual Quality Report so that it becomes a document which can be used as a student submission to this audit process and help shape the University's response.

Graduates & Employment

Beth and I have set up a focus group to kick-start this piece of work, which will take place on ****Monday of 5th Week (12th Feb), 6-7pm****. If you're a graduate who is employed, especially (but not only) within the University or colleges, please come along – we'll have food and drinks, and we want to hear your perspective! The longer-term aims of this work are to support and empower students as employees, and equip you to better face any issues that might arise.

Internal OUSU things

Somehow this is always an area I end up working on... I'm doing a fair amount of work at the moment on the Steering Group for OUSU's organizational Strategy for 2017-2021, which is really fun. I've also sat on OUSU's Finance Committee, reviewing the audit of last year's accounts, examining the operational budget, and considering potential additional expenditure.

And apart from all that, there's been the usual round of committees, meetings with students and staff, and other planning and projects just ticking along. As ever, if you need anything just shoot me an email. See you in 5th week!

Marina

Sandy Downs – Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

Hi everyone!

My most exciting thing since last Council is that I held an event called 'Myth or Reality: Your Year Abroad' with the Careers Service and with help from MFL. There was a great attendance, and we heard from the careers service, counselling service, and Student Advice Service, amongst others. We also got top tips from students who've returned from their year abroad. I was so happy that so many people reported having a great evening, as supporting students with year abroads was a huge aspect of my manifesto 😊

I've met with CRAE, Mind Your Head, OSDC, and Good Night Out, and am looking forward to meeting with LGBTQ Campaign soon. We've been planning budgets and events for the term, as well as campaign elections which I'll bombard you with constantly!

We had Welfcom at Worcester and an additional Welfcom/Prescom type thing at Keble. Lots of great conversations were had about best practice and college disparity, and I'm so grateful to everyone who came along and contributed, as well as Zach for organising Welfcom & dinner!

At the OUSU Winter Training Conference on Sunday I ran welfare officer training, and also a Preventing Prevent session – many thanks to Aliya Yule for her help with that! A reminder that Preventing Prevent Oxford has a facebook page, and you should all like it!! I'm also starting briefing departments in my capacity as a Prevent Steering group member, in short talks about the risks and impact of Prevent.

Will Andrews (MYH Chair) and I presented to the college welfare forum (a meeting of staff welfare leads across colleges) about student perspectives on mental health and resilience, and we'll be following that up with future meetings and work on the Student Mental Health Policy review.

We're still boycotting the NSS. Don't do it. Do something else instead. Anything else.

Lastly, nominations are closed and its up to you to choose the new OUSU sabbs and trustees, as well as your NUS delegates for next year! Get voting next Tuesday, and also get hyped for the election results night events which are going to be incredible!

Thanks! Sandy 😊

Orla White – Vice-President (Women)

Training

- Offered consent workshop training and first respondent training; this week I'll be training a few more people to deliver first respondent training in order to increase availability of the session.
- I gave a session entitled 'Introduction to Liberation' at OUSU's Winter Training Conference.
- I've had meetings regarding the future of the Bystander Intervention initiative.

Supporting Campaigns and Common Rooms

- On Tuesday, WomCam held a general meeting to discuss committee structures, our direction and campaigning priorities.

- I attended Welfare Committee, a meeting of Welfare Officers across common rooms.
- I held meetings with Women's Officers, student campaigners and other student leaders in order to discuss their priorities and offered advice and resources. I also met and/or gave information prior to the nominations period with individuals interested in running for my role.

Planning for International Women's Day

- IWD, March 8, coincides this year with a mass strike/day of action called by Irish abortion rights campaigners, #STRIKE4REPEAL. As a result, OUSU will be using IWD to draw attention to and fight against the injustices faced by those seeking abortion all across the island of Ireland.