



reports to 3rd week council michaelmas 2005

Emma Norris

President

The first thing to mention is OUSU annual elections - nominations opened yesterday and you can find nomination forms in this week's Oxford Student, or come into OUSU to pick one up. Nominations close next week. All details about how to run in the elections, and the timetable of what happens can be requested from this year's Returning Officer Daryl Leeworthy (daryl.leeworthy@oriel.oxford.ac.uk).

Second is the Oxford Student, which took up quite a bit of time last week - I think you will all have heard that due to a legal issue with an article, last week's paper could not be distributed. If you have questions about this then please ask me or the Vice President (Finance) and we will answer what we can.

Various matters have come up regarding central affiliation/ subscription - the first you will hear more about today: central affiliation to the NUS. I've spoken to a few NUS officers about this already, but will see what Council has to say before going any further. Second is Sky; you may have heard that Sky are upping subscription rates quite dramatically, and Presidents' Committee asked me to look into the possibility of a central payment scheme. I've emailed their customer service people and will let everyone know when I hear more.

The Socially Responsible Investment Campaign has taken up quite a lot of time since last Council. You've probably seen the Campaign Against the Arms Trade investment figures in the student press that rate Oxford as the second highest investor in the arms trade in the UK. Some JCRs are already investigating what this means for them, having previously been assured that their colleges has ethical investment policy. To draw attention to the figures, and to the wider SRI campaign, we'll be holding a speaker event (for which you should have seen posters) on Tuesday of 4th week at 7.30 in Balliol's Lecture Room 23. Speakers include the author and campaigning journalist Paul Kingsnorth, who will be speaking about how the activities of companies like BP in West Papua relates to ethical investment. Please all come along.

We'll also be doing an awareness-raising tour of the colleges with the worst investment records on Wednesday of 5th week, starting at 1pm outside St. Johns. You'll be hearing more about this in due course.

College Inequality Campaign has also been more active - we've decided to change direction from simply asking for redistribution, to the more effective step of writing a 'Minimum Standards Charter' that will ask the University to ensure minimum standards of accommodation, academic provision and so on in every college. Such a charter will take time to perfect, but once we've got a working document it will be brought to Council for discussion. Expect it in early Hilary.

Some of the last fortnight has been taken up with internal issues - we've had an intake of new exec (elected in last Council) so we went through a complete portfolio reassignment. Standing Committee also met to sort out mess in the office, which is really too boring to go into more detail on. However, one result of tidying is that we have quite a lot of spare new Oxford Handbooks - if any JCRs would like copies for common rooms and so on, please grab me after Council or email me and we can sort out getting them to you.

Apart from that there's little else to say - OSSL advice is still forthcoming - I'm trying to persuade one of the company law tutors to give free advice, with mixed success; the OUSU central grant is still under discussion.

Please remind everyone that nominations for the OUSU elections are now open.

Emma x

Chris Allan

V-P (Finance)

There's not very much to note about OUSU's finances or commercial services, with a couple of exceptions:

2nd week Oxstu - As most of you will be aware, we were unable to distribute the paper last week because of last minute legal problems (see this week's OxStu for more details). The main implication of this for OUSU is the lost advertising revenue that resulted; we don't know the exact figures yet, but the Business Manager has managed to reschedule virtually all of the adverts that were set to appear, keeping losses relatively low.

Oxide - Oxide has been going out over www.oxideradio.co.uk since the start of term, and as of Monday is broadcasting over FM. Make sure you tune in to 87.9 to listen.

Aidan Randle-Conde

Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)

Dear Council,

I'm sorry I haven't written to you in about two weeks. Things have been very busy and it's sometimes really hard to find the time! I'll tell you a bit about what I've been up to since we last spoke.

I've been dealing with quite a lot of casework over the past two weeks. This can sometimes take about 3 hours at a time or sometimes it's over in 10 minutes. Of course it's quite unpredictable when I'll get casework, how long it will take, and how often it comes up, so it keeps me on my toes.

There have been some more campaign meetings. It looks like there are quite a few people interested in Anti-Racism, which is good. I've met a couple of them in person to discuss what can be done with the campaign. I'll try to get some Co-Chairs appointed next week. A similar thing has happened with Queer Rights, and by the time Council meets the campaign should be off the ground again. Disabilities Action is (save a new Exec member) the same as ever really. It's active, doing great things and got many plans for the future. I don't usually like to name favourites, but Disabilities Action is my favourite campaign at the moment!

Health and Welfare is doing good things. We've had a listening skills meeting and a meeting with the Disability Office about long term health issues. I hope the Welfare Officers continue to be enthusiastic, because Health and Welfare is one of the most important Committees around.

Now that the campaigns are very nearly all off the ground and ready to fly (it took a while!) I can start devoting time to the Accommodation Committee. I want to get this Committee to meet again a couple of times before the end of term so that the Housing Officers are well informed of what there is to offer students before the January housing lists become available. Sue Jacobs, the University Accommodation Officer is wonderful and doing some great things. Helen Bagshaw is also wonderful and is currently finishing the Living Out Guide. Alice Wilby will be wonderful too, I'm sure,

One of the things that has really been bothering me of late is the number of boxes in the offices. I think we have a pest-box problem. Whether it's publications, gowns or printer paper these boxes just seem to multiply. I've spend quite a bit of free time moving them about a bit, and now quite a few are no longer "free range". Thanks to everyone who helped with this, it really makes a great difference to the office environment. We'll never be free of boxes (they're the sign of an active Business Team!) but we can make sure that the boxes we have are tidy so that they don't pose any health and safety or access problems, and at the end of the day a tidy office is a happier office. I also seem to be fighting with the printers quite a lot over the past couple of weeks. Thanks go to Maria and Chris for sorting that out for me- I can print essential documents again!

The Committee for Student Health and Welfare is looming. It's a big meeting of all the University Student Health Providers and Welfare Services. If there are any big issues that need raising (such as the PCT consultation) then I'd like people to get in touch so that I can voice these concerns. Otherwise it will be pleasantries in Wellington Square one afternoon.

The new Graduate Rep for the Committee for Student Health and Welfare is Laura Gilbert (elected last time!) and she's lovely. In turns out we both did Particle Physics, so we met up in the

Physics Cafeteria and talked through what her new role involves. She wants to set up an MCR Welfare Officers mailing list- thanks to all the MCR Presidents who have helped with this- it's very nearly there! Laura's also going to put up a website where students can give feedback about important issues that affect their health and wellbeing. All rather exciting!

I'm still pestering the Welfare Officers with my weekly E-mails. There are no surprises there really. I hope they appreciate how long I spend making those E-mails look beautiful! Read them all, they're fab.

The condoms machines are being ordered and cheques are arriving. So far I've had cheques from 8 different Common Rooms, which is good, but that still leaves about 15 or so. Intelligent Vending are pretty cool. Invoices should arrive presently, and I won't send any cheques on until they do arrive.

Well I'd better wrap things up. I'll write again in two weeks. Until then take care,
Aidan

Ellie Cumbo	V-P (Women)
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2nd Week

This week I have been liaising with the University's Childcare Officer about the new childcare network, which aims to match up any student parent with a childminder. Previously, the response from University staff had been very good, but less so from students. I have been publicising this through Women's Campaign and JCR and MCR Presidents, and I believe that many student parents, and also student childminders, have now come forward.

I have also met with the rest of Promoting Choice Committee in order to plan events for the coming term. We have booked the Magdalen Film Auditorium for Thursday of 4th Week, with thanks to Iain Simpson, for a showing of Vera Drake, and there will be a speaker meeting with a representative of Abortion Rights in 6th Week. The mailing list has been the bane of my week, owing to the intricacies of HeadPorter, but I hope it will be complete and functioning by the time Council meets.

3rd Week

The main focus of this week has been the Wear It Pink Party, which will be on Friday night from 8:30 in Wadham JCR, a joint Women's Campaign and RAG event. The party will feature In the Pink, The Oxford Gargoyles, a jazz trio, a pink raffle with prizes from LUSH and others, and pink party bags including sweets and shower cards from Breast Cancer Campaign. We are charging £5 entry plus two free drinks, and proceeds will go to Breast Cancer Campaign.

Women's Campaign has also been discussing plans on how to solicit student opinions on what the University should do about the Finals Gap. I will be attending EPSC Undergraduate Panel in 7th Week, by invitation, in order to propose ten suggestions on this, which will require much thought and consultation with the students of Oxford.

I have also, as usual, been dealing with casework and planning future events, including a Vagina Monologues performance to mark V-Day in Hilary Term and a Women in Business event for 6th Week. Watch this space.

Oliver Russell	V-P (Graduates)
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Since last Council I have met with Sau Wai to discuss the International Students' Committee and we have together interviewed and appointed two Co-chairs: Paul Hwang (Templeton) and Marketa Weiglova (Keble).

The VP (AccAff), Sau Wai and myself also attended a NUS joint lobby of Parliament over the issue of International Student visas and there is a motion on the table arising from that and our future plans regarding this key campaign.

I have also attended EPSC Graduate Panel as well as the main Education and Policy Standards Committee and made intelligent comments on English standards in applicants, the contribution of Graduates to colleges and the timing of the admissions procedure.

I have also joined the Information and Communications Technology Strategy Steering Group and been appointed to the Users Work Force, so will be shortly starting to canvass students for their views of an integrated ICT policy.

Charlynn Pullen

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

Well as you probably all know by now, our meetings with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and EPSC generally are going well. The Pro-V-C Education has requested that the VP (Women) comes to EPSC Undergraduate Panel in 7th week with 10 suggestions on how to solve the problem of the finals gap. While many may argue that the University should be doing this itself, the University has commissioned reports on this issue and no-one seems too sure what has happened to them so we are chasing up whether they have reported or not. In the meantime, I have spoken to my counterpart at Cambridge and he has made available to OUSU the report Cambridge University published recently documenting the difference in results across class, gender and ethnic groups. I understand Ellie is planning ways to get the opinions of students on how to solve these problems, so for more information read the report of the VP (Women).

I attended an NUS Lobby of Parliament on Wednesday 19th October with the VP (Graduates) and one of our Graduate Executive Officers. The briefing done by the NUS was excellent, and a motion in this council is brought to support their campaign to stop the government denying international students the right of appeal when their visas are refused. As many as one third of visas are rejected and in 2004 the Immigration Advisory Service won 59% of all appeals it handled. There is clearly a problem with how visas are permitted or not, and the solution to this should in no way be to deny the right to appeal against decisions which may well be wrongful.

With the VP (Graduates) and a part-time executive officer, I went to see the exhibition of the proposed building of the new RI site Humanities library. The person we spoke to seemed to give the opinion that it was much more of a long-term project than it had seemed when discussed by the University. We will pass on any information like this that we receive to the representatives on the library consultative groups.

Target Schools is ticking along nicely, with two new co-chairs the committee can now get down to firm plans for our events. After a long discussion yesterday, I will be bringing a motion to the next council about the opposition voiced to the White Paper on Education published by the government on 25th October. We may have a problem with our budget, but I will be doing more work on this issue over the next couple of weeks and will report back on the problems and proposed solutions.

Academic Affairs Committee will tonight be having a meeting on the NSS and a review of our policy on it. I have been in touch with the NUS about resources for this meeting and have received a copy of the questionnaire.

Other than this, I have been preparing for meetings, attending meetings (the others being Exec, WomCam to talk about the finals gap, council, an Access Steering Committee), and doing some casework.

**Hannah Stoddart
Community)**

Vice-President (Charities and

RAG

The following events have taken place:

Film nights: Amelie, Run Lola Run

There is never a great turnout for these nights, but they cost nothing to put on so it's probably still worth it

Eclectic – new RAG night at Love Bar

Overwhelming success, packed all night, great feedback, made £357 on door minus costs of night.
Bar Crawl

Great turnout, made £300.

Slight problem with Balliol bar manager due to miscommunication. Problem has been rectified and apologies made

Speed Dating

Sold out, more people wanted to take part than there were places (especially girls!). Only problem was the lack of drinks offers at Merton, despite having agreed to promotions with the manager.

This will be sorted out for next time,

Wear It Pink events

All RAG reps have been supplied with pink ribbons and collecting tins for their college events.

There is also an and a capella night at Wadham JCR on Friday in aid of Breast Cancer campaign.

There will also be Pink Party bags containing important info on how to check your breasts which are being organised by the VP Women.

Film nights: Amelie, Run Lola Run

There is never a great turnout for these nights, despite more extensive promotion this year, but they cost nothing to put on so it's probably still worth doing them.

COMMUNITY

Olga Primary School, Tower Hamlets

10 students have signed up to the tutoring scheme with the Olga Primary school, and their volunteer placements will start at the beginning of next week.

Oxford Get Involved

Promotion continues to get students using the website. Regular emails have been sent to the community maillist and there has been positive response, especially for the OxDox film festival

Poetry slam

This combines RAG and community projects, as I'm trying to get local organisations involved, and all the performers are volunteers. I have 8 students who will be performing next week

Future Outlook Alternative Careers Fair

A new exec portfolio has been created, which has been taken by Lydia Prieg. There will be a meeting early next week to elect some co-chairs. The committee will be attending a One World Oxford networking event in London in November so as to approach more people about speaking at the forums.