

OUSU

reports to council

3rd week trinity term 2009

Lewis Iwu

President

Rent

Best of luck to all of those who have rent discussions over the next couple of weeks. Don't forget that OUSU is here to support your others so make the best use of our data table, our rent pack and our expertise. Jamie and I are more than willing to come and help you plan strategy or sit in meetings so drop us a line. We will also be colating details of the current status of various negotiations for sharing best practice.

NUS Tuition fees working group

The first meeting of the NUS working group to look at an alternative to raising tution fees happened last week. The meteing was very productive and despite some differences over the detail of the policy the broad idea behind such an alternative was agreed upon. The anticipated release of this new model will be on the 10th June. As soon as it is released in the public domain we will put this on our website and send a copy round to your common room officers.

Election Workshop

Of the back of a successful workshop at St Johns, and sepcific workshops run by the VP (Women) I have decided that more election workshops are a good idea aimed at anyone considering running for any type of election. If you want myself or any of the executive to come to your common room and run such workshops, drop me an email at president@ousu.org

JCC Funding Proposals

Although we have no official feedback yet from the Estates Bursar's I have informally been told that the Estate Bursars are not in support of the proposed changes to the way OUSU is funded which would see colleges making part of the contribution. After a meeting with the committee that created the proposal it seems that we will have to rethink how we can change the model taking into account feedback from students and from colleges.

Rosanna McBeath

V-P (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)

No report as unwell.

Rachel Cummings

V-P (Women)

- Finals preparations for the Women In Politics Access day – whittled 170 applicants down to 110, co-ordinating our four speakers and the University press office who've asked for interviews, recruiting volunteer student helpers, liaising with the OU Computer Services to podcast the forum for University iTunes and to send out to unsuccessful applicants interested in the day
- Ran a successful women's public speaking workshop on Monday of 2nd week, preparing and publicising for the next one on Monday 4th (7:30pm, Union, non-members welcome)
- Interviewed for and recruited a new co-ordinator for Enough (well done Laura Taylor) and then held a successful second meeting of term
- Organised and attended a dinner for the head of all women societies in Oxford, attended by presidents of FEST, OxWip, OxWib, OULC Women's Caucus, Atalantas and the Union Women's Officer
- Sent copies of the Women Report to all Women's Officers and Female Welfare officers, published on

website and helped with Cherwell article/editorial about the research

- Attended the Gender Equality Scheme Steering Group meeting, looking over the report on its progress this year and liaising on new projects (particularly the Oxford Women's Network) with the Equality and Diversity Unit
- Had an initial planning meeting for Gender Equality Week to be held in 3rd week Michaelmas
- Ran the final three Finals Forums, all well attended and informative
- Working on an forum about female secondary education (mix versus single sex) with two local head teachers coming to debate at WomCam
- Starting organising a second Women in Graduate study informal mentoring event, for 5th week, hosted at either Hilda's or Balliol, recruiting graduates and a representative from the careers service (on the back of last term's successful event)
- Ongoing projects: writing a best practice document on Husts for common rooms, writing a paper on finals forums (asking departments to commit to organising them) to take to this term's Gender Panel, writing a presentation on WomCam and the VP (Women) for an International Gender Studies Seminar.
- Other events: Women's Officers meeting, Joint Consultative Committee meeting, St John's Common Room visit, JCR PresCom and MCR PresCom meetings, Tea and Toys student parent event, two Union Women's Initiative events, met with the new President of Oxford Women In Business, catch-up meeting with Michael Sibly and Keith Zimmerman, attended monthly meeting with the University's Gender Equality Officer, an OSSL Board meeting, two WomCam committee meetings and two actual WomCam meetings.

Kaushal Vidyarthee

V-P (Graduates)

University and College Committees: - Since the last OUSU council meeting, I have been to the meetings of Curators of Libraries Committee, Graduate Panel, Gender Equality Steering Committee, Education Committee, Social Science Division Board and OUCS management committee. The Education Committee discussed the issue of poor rates of DPhil submission within 4 years. At the Graduate panel meeting a paper on the Graduate Scholarship Fund was presented aiming to boost the funding for graduate students.

Meeting the University Officials:

I met Heather Bell, the director of international strategy and gave her updates on various international students' campaign projects such as festival, handbook and access scheme. At the term meeting with the International Project officer, Career Services, I discussed the possibility of organising the VISA workshop again in sixth week. I also met the director of sports to talk about the sports and other provisions at the University Club.

Graduate Financial Guarantees: The focus group discussion was attended by nine MCR and OUSU reps. The discussion was very productive as we raised concerns about the university's guidelines on living costs, documents required for the proof of finance etc. I also circulated the guarantee form to MCR presidents at the PresCom for their feedback.

International Students' Campaign: The campaign is doing great job. The OIF committee has met many times in last two weeks. The preparation for the festival is going good. The campaign organised a husting workshop and it was attended by around 20 people. An international drinks' evening has been planned for Thursday.

Mature Students' Campaign: Another drinks' evening in the fifth week is being planned.

Student Advice Service: I've had few case-works (mainly graduate academic ones).

PresCom Meeting- The first MCR prescom meeting of Trinity term was organised on Tuesday this week at St Catz. It was well attended and we discussed various issues including- OUSU finance, charities act, freshers'

fair 2009 and graduate financial guarantees. This meeting was an opportunity for sabs to meet many new MCR presidents.

PGA Review Group: The group met for the second last time and primarily discussed about inconsistencies regarding the PGA in various governing documents (i.e. constitution and standing orders).

Paul Dwyer

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

Not a great deal to report this week I'm afraid guys! One or two things just to pick up on:

Exam feedback paper is going through the murky waters of the university committee system as we speak. It's still with the divisions at the minute, but we are hoping for a report back at some time hopefully in Education Committee.

For reasons that I still cannot fathom, the chairman of the Senior Tutors committee did not receive the academic feedback paper that I had written, and this issue has only recently been put right. The working group will be looking at meeting at some point this term, but I'm afraid that it's going to be next term before any changes can be taken to Senior Tutors committee.

Target schools training is continuing at full pelt this term- you should all make sure to get yourselves fully trained and ready to head out come the summer!

The undergraduate prospectus advisory group met on Tuesday to discuss the publication for next year's admissions round. I put forward two particular issues that have come up recently- concerning the charges levied by colleges being included in the prospectus, as well as the matter and positioning of the PPH's. These matters are rather sensitive ones within the university, although I'm hoping to find a few people who are sympathetic to our cause, and I will continue to press ahead dutifully.

I have had contact from a number of schools over the past couple of week, who are all keen for me to go along to their schools and take part in workshops or presentations for students who are thinking of applying to Oxford. The first of these will be taking place in a few weeks time, and so I will make sure to report back at that point. It is worth pointing out that this is a really positive step for the access work that OUSU is doing, as more and more schools start to recognise the worth of our campaigns, and want to become more involved in the access work that we do.

I have met with the university concerning the alternative prospectus, and I am hoping to get the go ahead before 5th week council to start recruiting and editor for the project. There are a couple of kinks to work out (like who will pay for it for instance!), but hopefully these will be resolved very soon.

Jack Wellby

V-P (Charities & Community)

I thought about writing this in rhyming couplets but there was too much noise from my octuplets. Third week already – I can honestly say that the last two weeks have been hectic. Here is a brief description of what I've been doing, please email me (charities@ousu.org) or grab me if you have any questions.

- Helped run 'Lights, Climate, Action' which was put on by the Environment and Ethics Committee in the Cellar last Wednesday. This was a huge success and got people engaged with environmental issues in a series of interesting ways.
- The working party set up to look into common room charitable giving met last week and I've produced a draft paper as a result which is being discussed by the group at the moment. Good progress has been made and I think a final paper will be ready in 5th week. We will be looking to pilot the scheme at a few common rooms for next year so if you are interested or there has been confusion this term about charitable donations I think we may have a solution.
- The RAG casino has been in action at St Peters' Ball and Keble Ball. Thanks to all the volunteers who have made this such a huge success.
- I have been working with Daniel Lowe and Kate Aydin on producing a paper arguing that the university should sign up to ISO 14001 which is an internationally recognised Environmental

Management System. My input has been researching the drivers behind this process and finding arguments that the university should agree with.

- I met Mark Capanale with Julia Kostella (E&E Chair) to discuss Socially Responsible Investment and what we should be asking the University to do. The SRI committee meets for the 1st time in 5th week and I will report back on this.
- With the help of Rachel and Alice Thomas I have been coordinating a push to get Oxford students registered to vote in time for the elections on June 4th. Some colleges automatically register all students but others don't. If you would like to register you must do so by May 19th (Tuesday) and you'll find all the details at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk. I think all colleges should automatically register their students so this is something I'll be investigating soon.
- I met with Stuart Cullen and representatives from Asylum Welcome and The Council for Assisting Refugee Academics to continue to plan for the forum we are holding in the Union on the 26th May. This promises to be an excellent event so please help spread the word.

"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you can dream it, you can become it."

William Arthur Ward

PART TIME OFFICERS

Daniel Lowe	Environment and Ethics Officer
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Hi Council!

Lights, Climate Action! went off with out a hitch: we even exceeded capacity. Most of our Acts performed for free and we really appreciate their contributions.

As for SRI, I'm very excited; we finally have a date for the review committee meeting, but not just one... TWO! Yes that's right. In fifth and seventh week I shall be sitting down with the head honchos of the university to make sure the university isn't funding or profiting from social and environmental atrocities around the world.

Wish Me Luck!

Daniel

Jack Matthews	Common Room Support Officer
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Hello Council

I hope you are having an enjoyable term so far.

Over the past two weeks I have been to St Johns JCR and have also organised other visits to various Common Rooms across the University. If you would like anyone from OUSU to come a talk or answer questions in your common room, please let me know.

I have also been planning for the workshop on how to set up a university wide society and register with the proctors. This will culminate in a workshop on the evening of Thursday of 3rd Week. This is a bit late if you haven't heard about it before, as by the time you read this, it will have already happened! So I will be holding 1 on 1 sessions for anyone else who is interested - please do get in touch.

Finally I will soon be starting to work with a number of common room Presidents on ways of making common room officer handovers better.

Regards

Jack Matthews
commonrooms@ousu.org