

Reports to Council

3rd Week Council Trinity Term 2013

David J. Townsend

President

Chris Gray

VP (Graduates)

Highlights

Over the last 2 weeks I have attended the NUS Postgraduate Conference and helped shape their proposals on postgraduate funding and support for DPhil students who teach. I have also been lobbying our local MPs and the University to support change on PG funding, finalizing the new 'financial declaration' system, working with David Messling to move Division Rep elections into Divisions, and redrafting our General Regulations which will be coming to 5th week Council.

NUS Postgraduate Conference

I attended a two-day conference in Milton Keynes to discuss national policy on postgraduate matters. As well as re-affirming support for a Masters loan system, I also brought policy that mandates the NUS to lobby Research Councils to shift some PG funding back into Masters courses. In recent years they have stopped funding these courses completely, making it difficult for all but the wealthy to transition into DPhils and Phds.

PGT Funding Lobby

Having signed up Andrew Smith as a 'Postgraduate Champion' early in the term David Townsend has now met the VC to discuss the issue. Although the VC was unable to sign up, it is likely that the University will be producing a policy on Masters loans soon. I have also booked in a meeting with Nicola Blackwood, MP for Oxford West.

Financial Guarantee

The FG review has now met and we have agreed a proposal that all students will have to show evidence for first year fees, but only 'declare' that they have funds for future fees and living costs (without evidence). This has now gone out for consultation with colleges and departments. While we ideally wanted no evidence at all there was a risk that the alternative would have been full first year fees up front and I felt that the evidence systems leaves more room for flexibility.

Division Rep Elections

I've been working with David Messling and the Division Reps to shift the Division Rep elections into Divisions, online, and also to move them to Trinity. Assuming the motion before Council passes we will be having our first direct elections for Division Reps in 6th week of Trinity Term.

As always this is report records the news and highlights from my work. If anyone has any questions about any of this or my other work then please do ask them in Council or email me (graduates@ousu.org). Equally if anyone has an issue they would like me to work on drop me a line.

Katie Colliver

VP (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

Hi Council,

A brief one this week as it's not long since I wrote the first report of term.

What I've been up to...

- As you read this, Wellbeing Week will just be finishing up. It has taken up a fair amount of my time over the past couple of weeks but I have been pleased to see the wide variety of events that we have put on, and the interest that they have generated from students and University staff.
- We are currently in the final consultation stages for the Student Advice Service Review. I have sent an electronic survey round through Presidents and Welfare reps, so hopefully this has been passed on or you can fill it in here: <http://tinyurl.com/SAS-rvw> before Monday of 4th week (13/05/2013).

Coming up...

- I am following up the Peer Mentoring scheme with the Disability Advisory Service. Mentors have volunteered themselves and we will soon be in touch to deliver training.

As ever, drop me a line on welfare@ousu.org or catch me after Council if you want some more info on this, or if there is anything else I can help you with.

All the best,

Katie

David Messling

VP (Access & Academic Affairs)

Sarah Santhosham

VP (Charities & Community)

Hi Council,

The last two weeks have seen a whirlwind of activity on all fronts, from charity, to community relations, to environment and ethics and to the living wage. Here's a run-down of some of the things I've been doing, though feel free to contact me for more information.

Environment & Ethics

- Work is continuing in earnest on a new magazine I am editing this term. The magazine will be launching in 6th week and aims to provide students with an accessible and positive approach to environmental and ethical affairs. I have been busy co-ordinating the editorial team, advising the writers, finding sponsorship and arranging the printing.
- The E&E campaign is preparing its annual Campaigners Connected event to re-foster links with groups it is connected to around the city.

Living Wage

- The first meeting of the University's Working Group on the Living Wage met last week and very positive results came from the meeting, demonstrating the University's commitment to ensuring auxiliary staff are remunerated fairly.

Charity

- The past two weeks have seen a lot of activity by RAG, with a raid raising just under £600 for the Oxford Poverty Action Trust, a food stall at Wadstock, a charity skydive, a dodgeball competition and a burrito eating relay competition. Lots of work goes into overseeing these events and administering the money raised. Our casino service has also been active at many Oxford balls in the past few weeks.
- I have been doing a lot of strategic work for RAG, fostering links with external organisations and planning for the year ahead with the new committee.

Community

- I met representatives from a resident's group in East Oxford and Oxford Brookes to maintain our good relations and discuss areas of joint concern.
- The Community Warden scheme is active again and I have just opened a new round of applications for wardens to start in Michaelmas.

OUSU

- I've been working with all of OUSU's campaign chairs and have co-ordinated a series of workshops this term to support the work that they do more effectively
- I've been working with the Oxford Hub to help develop strategies to reach more students to foster a greater spirit of volunteering and action at University.

Suzanne Holsomback

VP (Women)

Hello All,

I hope this finds you all doing well and enjoying the sunshine. I have been working diligently on a few projects, so check out below for more details!

Also, if you identify as a woman, please join OUSU, WomCam, and OxFest for a Women's Garden Party on Saturday 11 May from 1-3pm at Green Templeton College. Please email me at women@ousu.org for more details.

Suzanne

What I'm doing about Sexual Consent

- Meet with two college welfare teams about holding sexual consent discussion with their sports teams this term and integrating sexual consent discussions into Freshers' Week.
- Began running sexual consent discussions in Pembroke.
- Training facilitators at Pembroke for sexual consent discussions beginning in 3rd week.
- Nominated the sexual consent discussions for the NUS Campaign of the Year award.
- Wrote a proposal for sexual consent discussions for Freshers' Week to take to the Senior Tutors' Committee later in the term.

What I'm doing about Gender Gaps

- Facilitated a stress management workshop for Pembroke's Wellbeing Week.
- Ran a finals forum for Modern Languages and Law FHS finalists.

What else I'm doing from 9am to 5pm(ish)

- Screened *Girl Rising*, a documentary about the impact of girls education. It was the first showing in England!
- Facilitated a Post-Graduate focus group!

Shout Out...

- To all of Pembroke. Your enthusiasm and openness to think deeper and broader about consent, communication, and respect is exciting. It is an honour to work with you all!

PART TIME OFFICERS

Tyler Alabanza-Behard

Access & Admissions Officer

This term I'll be working on developing 'Open Oxford', a website focused on short interviews with students. The intention for the videos to be both informative and demystifying; explaining what Oxford students get up to, but also the non-academic things that occupy our lives! If you'd like to get involved,

or you're handy with a camera - holla at me!

Nick Cooper

Graduate Academic Affairs Officer

Evening Council,

Hope everyone is well and enjoying the intermittent sunshine!

Chris and I have finished writing up our review of taught postgraduate courses and the information provided to students in advance, particularly in the areas of contact hours and assessment methods and timing. We're now seeing where we can take this information within the university, but it will hopefully help to improve the quality and quantity of details of PGT courses available on Departmental websites. We also hope it will help to reduce the vast differences between courses in terms of contact hours, and when/how students are assessed, especially in courses assessed entirely at the end of Trinity Term. More to follow.

Other than this, I also attended an exciting session on Friday about the future of digital technology in Oxford. Rock on! Hope you have a great 3rd week!

Nick

Hamaad Mustafa

Clubs & Societies Support Officer

Helping the West Wing Society and the Zimbabwean Society through the registration process

Helping Oxford Student PEN get a financial grant from the university

In touch with orgsync about how OUSU can make it easier for students to access clubs and societies

Katherine Stagg

LGBTQ Officer

Hi Council,

So far this term I've been working on the Out In Sport campaign by compiling a list of all sports clubs with mixed gender teams or practices. Hopefully this should make it a lot easier for people uncomfortable in single sex activities to participate in sports if they'd like to. I've also been looking into getting the university to display their commitment to the government's Sports Charter against homophobia and transphobia in sport on the sports federation's website.

As well as that, the weekend before last I attended NUS LGBT Conference and have come back with some new ideas for what we can do in Oxford. I've also been involved with the LGBT Campaign who have restarted their Gender Neutral campaign this term.

Sophie Williams

Graduate Women's Officer

This has been my first week in office, and apart from introductions and initiations, I've been looking towards organising a student-parent event in 4th week, and getting myself involved in the Athena Swan and gender representation panels. I'm looking forward to working more closely with other reps, Women's and Graduate's VP, in the coming weeks. If you've got ideas for things I should be doing, or could do better, please do get in touch.

Anya Metzger

Academic Affairs Campaigns Officer

Online Lectures

I discovered this week that Oxford puts more lectures online than any other UK university! At the moment lectures put themselves forward to be recorded and can choose if the recording is kept just on Weblearn or shared on www.podcasts.ox.ac.uk or on iTunesU (the channel for universities).

I will be emailing heads of department to encourage more academics to volunteer to be filmed (it has no impact on lecture turn-out). I will also be letting students know that if there is a particular lecture or series they want recorded they should ask the academic or let me know so I can ask on their behalf. Thanks go to Melissa Highton of IT services who co-ordinates the project.

Anya Metzger

Academic Affairs Campaigns Officer

Dear All,

Be sure to join our new Facebook page!

Also, mark your calendars for a social event in 6th week.

Yours Sincerely,
Henry Chong