



reports to 5th week council hilary 2006

Emma Norris

President

Socially Responsible Investment

The main issue since last Council has been Socially Responsible Investment; as I have mentioned previously, we were to take a paper on SRI to University Council this Monday. The paper was the result of a year and a half's research on SRI, and aims to ensure ethics are an essential part of the University's investment criteria. This would bring Oxford into line with almost all other Russell group and Ivy League universities. However, when student representatives received the University Council agenda, the SRI paper had been omitted. Disappointment and anger at this prompted a demonstration outside University Council. Councillors were handed the 4000 signature SRI petition, and the need to engage with us was reasserted. We are assured that SRI will be on the agenda in 1st week Trinity, at the latest.

NUS Central Affiliation

Gemma Tumelty, the National Secretary of the NUS, and our regional officer Scott Farmer, came to Oxford to discuss central affiliation with common room representatives. The meeting was held on Monday at Merton, with a reasonable turnout. Questions were asked about delegate numbers, what the NUS provides, and why central affiliation is preferable. A summary of the discussion, along with a model motion proposing central affiliation, will be circulated to all common rooms over the weekend.

Pro-Test

I've had quite a few questions about the student union's stance on animal rights activism; the student union believes that students and staff have a right to feel safe in their day to day Oxford lives. We do not currently hold on policy on the lab itself, but hold policy condemning any form of violent action. Anyone who is concerned about any aspect of the lab debate, especially personal safety, should get in touch. The University security service is happy to advise anyone with particular concerns and we can pass you onto them.

Common rooms

I've spoken at quite a few common rooms already this term, the latest being Lincoln and then Magdalen next week. These sessions provide an opportunity for students to ask questions about what we're doing, and get updates on headline issues like student contracts, the finals gap and sub fusc. If you want me or any sab to come and speak to your common room, please get in touch and we'll be happy to visit.

Aidan Randle-Conde

V-P (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)

Salutations. It seems like it was only a week since the last Council...

Publications

I'm updating our stock of publications. I'll be bringing the updated Publications Request Form to OUSU so that Welfare Officers from affiliated Common Rooms can request publications. The list is a fairly impressive one.

Rough Guide to Equal Opportunities

I've been spending quite a lot of time on this recently, updating all the information and hopefully providing even more information and guidance than ever before. Equal opportunities issues tend to get overlooked at all levels in Oxford, so keeping a strong student equal opportunities presence is vital. The new guide should go some way to helping minority officers in their roles. Speaking from personal experience, being a minority officer is not an easy role.

Consultative Committee for Health and Safety

The Consultative Committee for Health and Safety met and I attended, along with Laura Gilbert, the Graduate Representative for the Committee for Student Health and Welfare. I got the impression that

Laura and I were the first scientists that had sat as representatives on the committee for quite a while. I want to change this. I want to ensure that there is always a graduate representative present and one who knows about health and safety in a lab environment. This should ensure that we get as much from this committee as possible. I'll bring motions this effect to a subsequent Council.

OUSU Committees

OUSU committees have met, which is good. Disabilities Action is continuing its good work with Access Audits and a Disabilities Support Network. Health and Welfare has been stalled slightly, with nobody attending the last meeting and a Co-Chair election that didn't actually take place, due to a clash of meetings. Queer Rights has a new Co-Chair who is keen to get involved with campaigning about the closure of the Barnes Unit. Again, this will be brought to Council at a later date. Close Campsfield met again and have a lot planned for the future. I'm really happy to see how well things are going here. I'll see if I can get some stickers made for them.

Moving offices around (again!)

Once again I decided to move some office space around. This seems to be a never-ending task, but each time we get a more efficient and effective working environment. This time I moved the photocopier into what was the Exec Office. There is now a nice "Reprographics suite" which has created a lot more space in the General Office, as well as providing a single space for dealing all the photocopying and mailings that we do. This is a Good Thing.

Student Advice Service

Casework is still coming in all the time. Most of it straightforward, but there is always some ongoing work that needs constant attention. I had hoped to put more resources at the disposal of the Student Advice Service team, but that needs to wait really. It will be time-consuming, but well worth the effort. This may need to wait until next term.

Condom machines

I've had quite a few enquiries about condom machines, about buying new ones, fixing broken ones, ordering completely different kinds of machine and locating delivered ones. If you have any questions then get in touch. I am obsessed with these machines and very willing to visit them in person to see how they're doing.

I've probably missed a few points, so feel free to grab me and ask me more questions.

Ellie Cumbo

V-P (Women)

V Day

Tickets are going fast; reserve yours now by emailing me! To remind you, the dates are **Thursday-Saturday of 6th Week**, starting at 7:30pm at the Moser.

I want to flag up the event that we are holding on the **Tuesday of 6th Week**: the Creative Director of V-Day UK, Tamsin Larby, will be speaking at the Moser on "What V-Day Has to Say". V-Day is the global movement to end violence against women and girls. It is enormously high-profile in the USA and is set for the same success over here, so come and learn more about it and show your support. A speaker from our beneficiary, the Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre, will also address the audience on the importance of their service, and the difficulties they are currently having. This event is in association with Oxford Women in Politics; admission is £3.50, and profits will be added to our V-Day total.

Sex Trade Forum

This was held last Tuesday (4th Week) and had a high turnout and some impassioned debate following an address from Julie Davies of the International Union of Sex Workers. Many thanks must go to the Labour Club for their organisation and publicity skills.

Pro-Choice Forum

This is scheduled for after submission of this report; I will give feedback in Council.

Finals Gap

I attended Conference of Colleges Senior Tutors' Committee on Tuesday of 4th Week to present our findings on what students think is behind the Finals Gap. The feeling in the room was quite strongly that those who mark papers are biased against what they regard as a feminine answering style; I am going to continue to push for the investigation of other factors, such as the male-dominated nature of the actual learning experience.

Women's Finals Forums

I will be emailing out the timetable for these before Monday. I'm very pleased to have secured sessions for Maths, History, English and Classics, as well as others, as these subjects have the biggest gender gap in Finals results.

Women's Open Day

We are still looking for student volunteers to guide the young and unwary prospective applicants around Oxford, and show them all the major sights, like the new Primark. That was a test to see if you actually read my reports...but the request for volunteers is serious!

Oliver Russell	V-P (Graduates)
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In the last two weeks I have met with librarians at the RSL to convey students' concerns over the proposed changes there and to gather information about the likely disruption over the building works.

In the ICT Strategy Steering Group we approved the ECE (Enhanced Computing Environment) proposal and converted the Strawman Strategic Plan for the future of IT provision in Oxford into a Draft Strategic Plan. I have put together a stratified sample of students who will be receiving a questionnaire on the subject so if you get one please fill it in (I think there's even a prize).

I met with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) and discussed the central university's approach to the colleges' Student Contract. This was very constructive and, as a result the Chairman of the Graduate Panel of the Conference of Colleges has asked me to submit a paper on the subject of Student Contracts and OUSU's aspirations theretowith. I will bring any such paper to Council before I submit it next term.

Extraordinary Council was fun last Friday, so thank you to all those who came and helped Charlyne and myself shape our submission to the Admissions Framework document.

University Council on Monday was interesting in that the SRI paper was not put on the agenda. Emma made our frank feelings on the subject known to the Council and the fact that we had over 4,000 names on a petition and the demonstration outside underlined the strength of feeling on the issue so thank you to all those who contributed, we'll keep you updated on the next step.

I have called a meeting of the Post Graduate Assembly for 6pm on next Thursday at Lincoln. All postgraduates can attend and vote and we will be having MCR Presidents' Dinner afterwards so please RSVP to Stuart if you haven't already done so.

Finally in my capacity as Deputy Returning Officer I have been giving some time to shaping the online poll on the future of sub fusc (the Electoral Regualtions should be in front of you). I should stress that OUSU has no policy on this issue and this poll should not be portrayed as an attempt by some sinister clique to get rid of sub fusc but a consultation of the student body to determine our collective stance on the matter. Please bear this in mind during the campaigning period.

Charlyne Pullen	V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)
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This fortnight, admissions and Target Schools have taken over the bulk of my job. Target Schools because bookings have come in from far and wide for Regional Conferences and Open Days, and so the whole Target Schools team have been inputting data about these bookings. We are currently looking forward to the Women's Open Day which we should fill, on Monday of 7th week, and the Regional Conferences in 9th week of this term. We are going to Belfast, Derry, Enniskillen and Norwich and have been organising the timetables for these events, a particular thanks to David for his Derry timetable. The Open Days in June

are also filling up nicely and we will be finalising the timetable details by the end of this term for those hopefully.

School visiting is a major thing which has not yet taken up enough of my time and should take up more in the next fortnight as we organise students to go back to their schools. We need to coordinate this to make sure schools are not visited twice by students at Oxford, or that other schools get left out, and so we will shortly be doing more publicity and organisation to ensure that the problems of previous years are ironed out. If you are interested in getting involved with school visiting over the Easter vac please email access@ousu.org stating which school you would like to visit, or the area you would be happy to visit.

Admissions has been important this fortnight, mainly thanks to last weeks' extraordinary council. I am currently in the process of writing our response and would encourage JCRs to make sure that they get their response in promptly by Friday of 5th week.

Casework has been busy in the past fortnight, and is more complicated than ever so research for that purpose has been important recently.

Libraries has once again been important this fortnight, with the VP (Graduates) and myself attending a meeting of the RSL Management Committee to discuss with them ways of getting more feedback from students about the library and how to effectively communicate the disruption that will occur over the next year to ensure that RSL complies with SENDA legislation, and the merging of the RSL and the Hooke libraries. We have been assured that this will bring with it longer opening hours for the new RSL and hope that students will be pleased with the merger. If anyone has any comments about this issue, please email access@ousu.org and I will be sure to pass any comments on to the RSL.

Student Contracts have been important this fortnight, as I attended meetings of EPSC and Senior Tutors Committee. The paper trail has finally been found and it is clear that the consultation with the current cohort of students has been minimal at best. The University has made it clear that the undergraduate contract that some of you may have seen is in no way connected with the University, and is solely from the Conference of Colleges. As a result, the University wish to re-open the case on their student contract to allow proper student consultation. This will come to EPSC probably next term and I will be making clear the importance of the student charter produced by OUSU some years ago. This student charter makes it clear that students will only accept to meet at least a minimum standard if the University and Colleges do the same. It is through this document, which has previously been seen and approved by EPSC, that we hope to negotiate with the University on the student contract. For more information or to make any comments, please email access@ousu.org.

Hannah Stoddart

V-P (Charities and Community)

Community and Volunteering

There are now three co-chairs for the Community Committee. We have met a few times and are trying to establish better links with the city and county council, which will hopefully lead to the establishment of Councillor 'surgeries' on a twice termly basis in the OUSU offices.

We are also pressing on with Community Outreach, and contacting more local groups to try to create more volunteering opportunities. The website will be updated with these new opportunities shortly.

I am trying to get Community reps elected in each college who will help with advertising volunteering opportunities as well as getting involved with community projects such as the Cowley Road Carnival

Environment and One World

Environment Committee is producing an A3 laminated poster for each college with a number of awareness raising facts. The campaign to encourage the university to stick with Green electricity also continues. Motions mandating JCR Presidents and Environment reps to write to the University to urge them to re-sign their green electricity contracts are going through Common Rooms now.

There will be a One World Meeting next Tuesday at 7pm in OUSU for 'one world' groups to get together and talk about how we can work together more effectively, and how we are going to plan One World Week.

RAG

Blind Date went very well and raised over £1000. We also sold over 1500 roses for Valentines day, which made considerable profits for RAG.

Organisation continues for the World Food Fair at Wadham Old Refectory this Saturday.

There will also be a street collection for Crisis on Saturday, as well as a RAG busk on Turl Street as part of the Turl St Arts Festival