

# OUSU

## reports to council

5th week hilary 2008

**Martin McCluskey**

**President**

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to 5th Week Council! Can't believe we're more than halfway through the year already. Things are going too quickly. The last couple of weeks have been a bit quieter than normal, so this report may look a bit sparse. However, I've been filling my time when I've not been in meetings with catching up on OUSU admin and meeting CR Presidents and OUSU Reps

Martin

### **Proctors**

Along with a number of JCR Presidents, I met with the Proctors. In a wide ranging meeting, we discussed a number of issues including Celebrations after exams. The Proctors made clear that their opinions had not changed since the summer.

The current set of Proctors leave office on Wednesday of 9th Week and will be replaced by Don Fraser (Worcester) and David Harris (St. Anne's). The new assessor is John Nightingale (Magdalen)

### **Institutional Audit**

With James and Ingrid, I met with the University staff responsible for preparing for next year's QAA Audit. The Audit is like an OFSTED inspection for the University and it is a process in which OUSU is involved. OUSU will be submitting a report for the auditors before the end of the year, which will be considered as part of their visit next Hilary.

We'll be consulting with JCRs, MCRs and individual students over the content of the report and we're looking to conduct surveys and focus groups during Trinity.

### **Rent**

As mentioned in the last report, we had a constructive first meeting on rents during 3rd Week. Since then, Dom has updated the rent pack and is now working on a comparisons sheet for next week, when we hope to have another meeting.

### **JCC Working Group on OUSU Funding**

The first meeting of this group is on Friday morning, so I'll update everyone on what happened at the start of Council.

### **Vice Chancellor**

I met with the Vice Chancellor and discussed matters arising at University Council which included the legislation to create the University's SRI Review Committee.

## **Groupware**

I attended the final meeting of the Groupware Requirements Panel. A number of new groups will now be put together to decide on the final groupware solution and oversee the implementation. The first group of users are scheduled to go on the system in October.

## **Living Wage**

I was invited to a meeting of the Living Wage campaign in the Town Hall. The campaign, which was given OUSU backing a couple of years ago, is progressing well.

## **Prescom**

I attended Prescom along with Louise, Ingrid, Rich and Claire. We discussed, among other things, Representation on Governing Body (which I've now put out a survey on to JCR Presidents) and Scholarship schemes for international students.

## **OUSU Reps**

I attended the OUSU Reps Pre-Council meeting.

## **Common Room Liaison**

I attended meetings at Worcester JCR and Christ Church GCR.

<b>Louise Randall Opportunities)</b>	<b>V-P</b>	<b>(Welfare</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>Equal</b>
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"Roses are red, violets are blue..." I hope your 5th week has been full of roses not blues!

As always, most of my time has been taken up with Student Advice Service work, and an enormous daily barrage of emails to be answered and acted upon. Aside from all of that, these are some of the notable events of the last 2 weeks in the life of this VP (Welfare & Equal Ops)...

SAS review group

This is going well, and we're in the process of collecting data from users of the SAS, common room officers, and lots of other people besides. If you have a view on the way your Student Advice Service is run, get in touch on [SASreview@ousu.org](mailto:SASreview@ousu.org), we want your views!

Walk Safe

The committee has been undertaking student surveys on attitudes to night safety, and has been working with the Safety Bus to see how the 2 schemes might best work together, and has been working on exciting sponsorship deals and incentives for volunteers. Walk Safe – to be launched soon!

Dyslexia and dyspraxia forum

I am currently working with the University Disability Office, and some keen students, to bring together a forum of students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, to lobby the university for better

provision and a wider understanding of the needs such students have. If you want to be involved, email [welfare@ousu.org](mailto:welfare@ousu.org)

#### Sexual health

A small but not unnoticeable chunk of my time has been spent writing easy 'user guides' to dental dams. No one has emailed to ask me to include it in my council report, but if you are interested, email me ;) Fun fun...

#### LGBTQ training day

After a lot of time spent struggling to get the contact details for LGBTQ reps, the mailing list is coming together, and the training evening on Monday of 5th was very well attended. It was led by 2 representatives from the Oxford Friend LGBTQ support network. Feedback has been really positive. We raced through various issues from listening skills to issues most common in the LGBTQ student community. As a result of the session, I am now setting up regular LGBTQ reps meetings, and regular mail lists, to try and improve the support we are able to give to college diversity reps. Please get in touch if you can see a need for other similarly specific training days for the welfare and diversity reps from your colleges, and I'll do my best to organise it!

<b>Hannah Roe</b>	<b>V-P (Women)</b>
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Meetings attended:  
Women's Campaign  
Women's Officers meeting

Safety Bus - After a meeting between the Walk Safe Co-ordinator, myself and the Brookes co-ordinator, we are developing plans for increased co-operation and resource sharing between the two schemes over the coming year.

Access - I attended the 25th Anniversary of Target Schools, taking the Women's Open Day leaflets. The figures on applications and admittance to Oxford from women are still not as high as they should be. The meeting regarding the women and science access project which I gave notice of in my last report was successful - future meetings will follow. For the upcoming Open Days for Women, BME students and SWD, I have been liaising with the Careers Service over presentations that they will be giving.

Women's Campaign - Women's Campaign has elected a new committee and is putting on a number of successful events, including V-Day this week.

Women's Officers Meeting - This meeting raised interesting issues regarding institutionalised support for Women's Officers in their Colleges- those with Tutor's for Women explained how useful this was in ensuring that the issues they raised were addressed quickly at the College level. I will be organising a 'Tutorial forum' jointly with a number of colleges, to look at the issues facing women in tutorials, which are identified as one of the factors influencing the finals gender gap.

Eating Disorders - Preliminary investigations show that some colleges offer almost nothing in the way of catering facilities for students other than hall. This will be included in the proposal that I am writing for the Student Health and Welfare committee along with the other co-ordinators of Enough! for further work by the University to look at support for students affected by eating disorders. Writing the proposal is taking a significant amount of time.

Student Parents - I am working on sharing college maternity and paternity policies. The student parents maillist is growing and I am investigating the possibility of setting up a student parents committee. The issues facing student parents in the University are vast. I will be following up the proposal taken to JCC by my predecessor, Eleanor Cumbo, on support for student parents.

**Ingrid Frater**

**V-P (Graduates)**

**University Committees** – I have been to Gender Equality Steering Group, EPSC, University Council, Graduate Committee of the Conference of Colleges, Language Centre Committee, and EPSC Graduate Skills Advisory Group. Ask me if you would like to know anything about what was discussed.

**Institutional Audit** – in Hilary 2009. the University will be audited (kind of like Ofsted for a University), primarily looking at quality enhancement, educational standards etc. As part of this, OUSU submits a report on the University, so we've formed the bare framework of our report and will be collecting information and writing the report over the coming weeks and months.

**Academic Student Representation** – a paper is coming to Council today and will be going to EPSC on how to improve student academic representation.

**International Students' Campaign** – the campaign is continuing to grow. The festival is coming along well.

**Mature Students' Campaign** – I'll be meeting someone who's interested in working on this next week.

**Junior Deans** – I met with several Junior Deans to allow them a chance to talk about their experiences.

**Graduate student event** – this is now called '**Have Your Say: Developing Your Graduate Experience**'. It's on Tuesday at 6pm at Green. The University are being very keen and we'll have key staff from all areas. Should be good...

**SAS** – Casework is continuing as usual.

**MCR PresCom** – is on Monday at Queen's.

**Common Rooms** – I've been to Oriel MCR, Christ Church GCR, and New JCR.

**Proctors and Assessor** – they met with the CR Presidents and me and Martin. It was interesting... we talked particularly about trashing.

**James Lamming**

**V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)**

Hilary continues a pace, and I'm pleased to report fairly good progress on all the projects so far. Lots for people to get involved in, either with Target Schools (meeting next Wednesday) or Institutional Audit (come and speak to me). Highlight of the past few weeks was the Target Schools reception in Parliament, but some positive news on academic discipline and the open days. Any questions, get in touch.

**Access**

**Target Schools Parliament Reception** – The reception on the 6<sup>th</sup> February was a huge success, attended by dozens of MPs and Lords. I gave a short speech challenging the University and OUSU to coordinate more effectively, and the government to improve the education system. Quick bit of name dropping: chatted to Bill Rammell (Minister for Higher Education), Baroness Morgan (Minister for Students), Dr Evan Harris MP, Bob Marshall Andrews MP, various other Lords and Wendy Piatt who is director of the Russell Group. Thank you to all the students who came across and helped put a friendly and enthusiastic face on the event.

**Open Days** – On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March (9<sup>th</sup> week) there will be a BME open day at Christ Church, a students with disabilities open day at Wadham and a women's open day at Exeter. Invitations have been sent out to over a hundred schools and via Teach First. We are looking for volunteers so please get in touch if you would like to help out.

**Target Schools** - Next Wednesday at 5pm I am holding a Target Schools meeting in the OUSU offices. We will discuss plans for next term and how people might get involved. Feel free to turn up and encourage other people to come.

**Access more generally** – Various meetings and presentations, including recent research on how the University is reaching out to BME students. Currently working on a scheme for an 'Admissions Fair' to accompany the University Open Days, and will report back when I know more.

## **Academic Affairs**

**Academic Discipline** – The academic discipline paper has been finished, with help from constructive criticism from a number of Senior Tutors. I am presenting it at Senior Tutors meeting next week, and anticipate a committee being set up to discuss it and make recommendations. I have also been lobbying for improvements in the First Public Exam retake regulations, to ensure everyone who has not previously been subject to serious academic discipline measures is allowed at least one retake.

**Institutional Audit** – As part of the Institutional Audit next year, OUSU will be offering a student submission. I'll be convening steering groups for the areas in which I am responsible next week. If you have an interest in academic affairs, and want to help rate the University from a student perspective, including offering ideas for improvements, please get in touch.

**Finals Forums** – With the help of Joy, Kat and Hannah, we are organising Finals Forums for Science students on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> week and Arts students on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> week. We are still looking for recent graduates (or 4<sup>th</sup> year science students) to talk about their experiences of sitting finals, and help would be really appreciated.

## **OUSU**

**Misc** – OSSL board, cardboard tidying, ending no platform referendum, responding to press queries, etc.

**Claire Addison**

**V-P (Charities and Community)**

Hi everyone,

Next week is RAG week so I've been working on that with the fabulous RAG committee. The schedule so far looks like this:

Saturday of 5th: RAG Comedy Night at St John's Auditorium, from 7pm

Tuesday of 6th: Rendezvous, in association with Students Supporting

Street Kids.

Wednesday: Mr & Miss Oxford, from 8pm at the Oxford Union

Thursday: Eclectric for RAG, Love Bar

Friday: RAG Pub Golf

Saturday: 'Run for RAG' in University Parks

Join the Facebook group!

We've also been selling novelty condom roses for Valentine's Day for only £1, and they've been really successful. They're not very classy, but good fun. Much like RAG itself!

The RAG website is also getting something of an update this week.

The Environment and Ethics Committee are working on their excess packaging campaign. This weekend they'll be handing out information outside the major supermarkets in town. They're also making a plastic bag sculpture to highlight the issue in colleges.

I've been promoting college branded re-usable canvas bags; a scheme which is already underway in Worcester and Brasenose. The bags cost between £1.70 and £2.50 each. Ask for more info!

The new Student Volunteering Committee is going really well. In the last week we've had meetings with OxHub about how the two will integrate in the future, and we've been looking at funding options as well as models from other universities. We're hoping to launch in a small way next term and then really go for it at Freshers' Fair.

Sorry this is so short - it's very late!

## **PART TIME OFFICERS**

<b>Becci Burton</b> <b>Officer</b>	<b>Health and Welfare</b>
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Since my last report, I attended a very useful welfare training run by Louise, which was of especial use to me as I have not done peer support. I also attended a meeting with some of the welfare officers; although nothing as such arose for me to do, it was very interesting to find out how they are finding things.

My main project for this term is my involvement with Walk Safe - this is a night time safety initiative, in which pairs of volunteers cycle to meet other students so that they have don't have to walk alone at night. Although still running informally this term, there will be a big launch later on. If you would like to find out more details, or would like to volunteer there is a facebook group which should be accessible by searching "Walk Safe". Any queries could also be addressed to [walksafe@ousu.org](mailto:walksafe@ousu.org). In any case please join the facebook group and invite your friends to join as one of our main goals for this term is merely to increase awareness for the scheme. Thank you! If you have any questions about this or any other issues then feel free to email me at [healthandwelfare@ousu.org](mailto:healthandwelfare@ousu.org).

<b>Jamie Li</b>	<b>International Students Officer</b>
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The Oxford International Festival is going ahead as planned. Look for our first wave of publicity coming up and encourage people to get involved! The committee meets Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm in the OUSU offices. Many wonderful individuals and societies across Oxford are participating, but there is always room for a few more!

**Dominic Weinberg**  
**Officer**

**Rent and Accommodation**

Had a very productive meeting on rent and rent negotiations with lots of presidents a couple of weeks ago. Thanks to all who came. Have updated the Rent Pack to reflect some of the things we discussed and have added an overview page so hopefully it's more obvious how to find the information in there. Thanks to everyone who's given me their rent data from the last couple of years, those who haven't please do so.