

Reports to Council

5th week council ht12

Martha Mackenzie

President

Evening Council,

I hope you're managing to fight off those 5th Week Blues, I know this glorious sunshine has definitely been helping me! Welcome to any new delegates, if you are new and haven't had a chance to meet me yet do drop me an email and say hello!

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Careers' Guide:

I have been doing a lot of work on the Oxford Guide to Careers, our project in conjunction with the Careers Service. Our call for student contributions was overwhelmingly well received, a briefing lunch was held yesterday and I have been distributing the relevant information to all our volunteers. If you are interested in finding out more just drop me an email.

Student Led Teaching Awards:

Hannah and I have put a lot of work into the preparations for the launch. We have been filming a selection of students talking about their teaching experiences and concentrating on design and publicity. Nominations open on Monday 7th Week (26th February) and the publicity should launch Monday of 6th Week (20th February).

I also attended a support day organised by the NUS and the Higher Education Academy, the day was very useful in helping us prepare the publicity and start thinking about the shortlisting process.

Housing:

The Petition has now been presented to the Letting Agencies and the individual meetings have begun. With the backing of Finders Keepers a 'summit' has now been called for early March, this will bring all the Letting Agencies together to discuss our proposal. I am meeting with the city council tonight to talk about more serious legislation and how to police our proposals.

Bye-Laws:

After a lot of work OUSU's Bye-Laws are finally going through the relevant University Committees. They have been accepted by the Joint Sub-Committee (of Education Committee) with Student Members and Education Committee. They are now just awaiting consideration by the chair of the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee and General Purposes Committee. I have realised that First Week Trinity Council is during NUS Conference so the Bye-Laws will actually be presented in 3rd Week Trinity Council.

NUS Conference:

I have been doing a lot of work with your NUS Delegates (who are excellent) in preparing for NUS Conference in April. We have been analysing the current proposals and thinking about appropriate amendments (each institution is entitled to 1,400 words). A number of our thoughts will be coming to 7th Week Hilary Council and hopefully lots of common rooms in advance. If you want to find out more about the proposals going to conference or feel very strongly that there is something we should be standing for/ against please raise it with any one of us. You can access all the information through the Facebook page 'NUS Conference 2012'.

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Since third week I have also represented you on University Council and a meeting about the Ditchely Challenge Fund (a scheme to encourage more current students to donate to their colleges or departments) I have convened the third Steering Committee and first Finance Committee of term (also officially appointing our new Trustee James Hunt); I have attended one Prescom, one Electoral Review Meeting, and Aldwych Conference. I have met six students; compiled a whole-lot-of rent information; and held four training sessions.

Have a great week! As ever, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or any of the other OUSU Officers.

Martha x

Yuan Yang

VP (Women)

Oh wow Council, it's been an intense fortnight. Apologies in advance for my excessive use of the word "intense". This is what I've been up to:

Empowering Students as Leaders

The Leadership Development Partnership with Ruskin Student Union is in its final stages of preparation, before the first training sessions kick off next week! I've been very busy:

- Ensuring that the **evaluation** of the project is built into the programme: we want to develop students' self-identity and skill as leaders, but also to develop students' understanding and management of **equality** issues - for example, to help them better understand why there may be a lack of engagement from minority groups in their organization.
- **Managing** a variety of different trainers on £2,000 worth of training contracts, making sure the training is tailored to the needs of Oxford University students.
- **Interviewing** and screening over 25 applications to act as group facilitators from Oxford University students. There was a huge amount of talent and so it was really hard to whittle down to 3!

Academic Progression & Athena-SWAN

Big shout-out to the graduate reps, and our Graduate Women's Officer, **Clara Ferreira**, in the Medical Sciences department of **Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics** (affectionately known as "DPAG") for organizing two very successful focus groups - 16 students at each - leading into setting student demands on the Athena-SWAN Departmental Action Plan! Some reflections on Athena-SWAN:

- The new biochemistry building has a really nice café, but it's a bit too noisy for hosting meetings with reps when you're trying to convey lots of information.
- I discovered we're much much better briefed as a Student Union than our peers, when I travelled to Bristol to give a talk to the Aldwych Group (the student unions of the Russell Group of universities) on how to make best use of the Athena-SWAN agenda, hoping to spread best practice throughout the sector.
- I also discovered that train journeys are really efficient sensory-isolation experiences for getting mentally intensive work done.
- The Medical Research Council of Scotland is highly likely to make an Athena award a necessary part of funding applications. If this happens, and the rest of the UK MRC follows suit, the medical sciences will experience a revolution.

Common Room & Student Support

I've held another negotiation training session with Women's Officers, and am considering doing a re-run because of the highly positive feedback we got - nothing seems better for preparing to present demands to a particularly intimidating Senior Tutor!

I'd also like to big up **Lucy Freeland**, who is organising **St. Hilda's Festival**, a week celebrating the gender equality-pioneering history of Hilda's, in 6th Week. All are welcome from across the university!

Sexy Training

Well not quite, but I wanted you to read to the end of the report.

- I've delivered a Sexual Consent Workshop with Liz Jones, City Council Domestic and Sexual Abuse Co-ordinator, for Merton's Peer Supporters.
- Organised a Stalking & Harassment Workshop for University staff with student-facing roles. Lots of Deans, Senior Tutors and Chaplains at this one, which is reassuring - and important for university-wide structural change on approaches to harassment!
- **MOST EXCITINGLY**, I'm developing a new series of training sessions for Welfare Officers and Women's Officers. They are based on psychological and criminological evidence on how to **prevent** sexual assault - as well as **respond** to it. We have the power to bring change! The first workshop is at Herford on Tues 5th Week, and I'm very excited. Can you tell?

With best wishes, Yuan

Jim O'Connell

VP (Graduates)

5th Week already. This term has absolutely flown by...

Most of what I have been doing for the last two weeks is running focus groups for the PGR Provision Review. We've run 29 Focus Groups in total, across 15 departments and 14 colleges. A massive thanks to everyone who helped with Focus Groups - particularly Hannah, Francesco, Amanda, and Bridget.

I'm writing up the findings this week, and will present a brief summary of the findings to Council in 7th Week.

Aside from that, I've been ticking over as per usual. Last week I attended a 2-day Conference planning for the future of the Bod - predictably I continued to push for 24hour (or just more) library access and continued and where possible enhanced work space. The standard of professionalism on show was impressive; I continue to believe that the Bod is one of the better run organisations in the University.

I have also attended two recent events to make the case for Graduate Access -the Access Showcase the Friday before last and the Westminster Reception last Wednesday. Both were fun, useful and especial congrats to Hannah on the Access Showcase which was a) great and b) very useful for advancing the access agenda within the University.

Last couple of weeks has included University Council and Education Committee, both of which I have used to make points about funding and the graduate admissions process. On the latter point, I am going to look to use the rest of my term of office to push for greater rigour in the admissions process, and particularly for a consideration of the role of interviews. Undergraduates may not realise that most grads don't get interviewed before they're admitted. This is a shame because an interview is an excellent opportunity for both department and student to question what is expected of each other. Graduate students have often reported that either their provision has differed from their expectations, or it has not been clear what is expected of them during their time on their course.

Other recent committee work has included the Joint Sub Committee of Education Committee, the Committee for the Language Centre and the Graduate Committee of Conference of Colleges. I spoke to the revised OUSU Bylaws at JsCECSM and at Education Committee, although Martha deserves all the credit for making sure they are written and steering them through the University. At Graduate Committee I told the Colleges to cut red tape, which was fun.

A short plug - look out for the Oxford International Festival, it's going to be great. Sunday of 7th in the Exam Schools.

I also had my Scrutiny Interview last week with Charlie, which I thought was very useful. I'm looking forward to the report. I was also pleased to see that Scrutiny Committee is considering the issue of sab welfare, which I think Council should have a think about. I'm torn on this myself - all this year's sab team should really attend workaholics anonymous (I reckon I've worked at least 60 hours every week this term). However, other sab teams have not worked as hard and I think it's important to be as hardworking and effective as possible for your year in office.

I think of doing a series as hard work. But then I've talked to coal miners, and that's really hard work.

William Shatner

Sebastian Baird

VP (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

Hi Council,

I hope you're all well. I'm sorry I missed 3rd week council. Here's what I've been doing for the past couple of weeks:

- **Common Rooms:** I have met with a couple of JCR and MCR Presidents, and a bunch of welfare officers, to talk about welfare in their colleges. Big on the agenda are, as always, mental health and exam stress.
- **Training:** I organised a seminar for JCR and MCR Welfare Officers with Nicola Byrom, eating disorders supremo and Director of Student-Run Self Help. The Welfare Officers that attended found the session useful.
- **Women's Officer Training** - I organised and delivered a training for Women's Officers with Yuan, which covered approaching college officials and how to negotiate with them to achieve goals.
- **MYH Campaign:** I have continued my work as the chair of the new OUSU Mind Your Head Campaign. We had a meeting last week, and we talked a bit about where we want to be going for the rest of the term. Top of the agenda were getting content on the website, organising a physical publicity campaign, and seeing whether we could get a film made.
- **Mental Health Events:** I have been working with 4 different common rooms to organise mental health awareness events across the rest of the term.
- **MYH Launch Reception:** I have been working with Tatiana (MYH co-chair) to organise the launch reception for the Mind Your Head Campaign that we are having on the 8th March. Events management is really time-consuming, so this has taken up more time than I had hoped it would.
- **Events:** attended JCR Prescom, Parliamentary reception to celebrate Oxford's Access Work, and the 'Idea of the University' Project's Undergraduate Debate, all in my personal capacity.
- **Student Advice Service - casework**
- **Student Advice Service - organisation.** Brona, our Chief Executive, and I have been working on improving the policies of the Student Advice Service. I'm working particularly on updating the complaints procedure for the Service, and looking at the confidentiality policy too. We're also investigating the costs of different case management software, which will improve the efficiency of the work of the service hugely.

"To different minds, the same world is a hell, and a heaven."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Hiya Council,

Since we last met I have mostly been here, there and everywhere working on access & academic affairs and in a number of quite unnecessarily long University committee meetings.

Smarter Access Work

Access Fair!

It happened on 3rd February and was a pretty big success. There was really only standing room only for the panel discussion, which featured me, the Master of St Peters, the incredible David Gustav Wadham alumnus & head of the Kid's Company and James Turner from the Sutton Trust. People seemed to really enjoy the debate and Q&A session along with looking round the stalls. It was so worthwhile showcasing the best projects across Oxford with lots of people going back with inspiring ideas for their own work.

Mike Nicholson- Common Room officers training

Armed with most of the statistics you'd want to know about Oxford Mike Nicholson, Head of Undergraduate Admissions gave a stellar training session to JCR presidents and Access reps from about 16/17 different colleges. Being in possession of the facts is the first step towards smarter access work I reckon. Emily Cousens, OUSU's part-time Access Officer, and I will be holding a follow-up session hopefully in 6th week with JCR officers.

Parliament Reception- A discussion about widening access to Oxford

Firstly, a huge thanks to the students who came down to Westminster with me and the rest of the sabbs, you were great. Lots of good discussion with MPs and Lords took place & the students were key to that. Apparently a similar event was held 4 years ago but this time the reception was completely different; instead of hostility parliamentarians were asking what they could do to help Oxford in its mission to widen access!

Bridging Provision

Conference of Colleges discusses it next week (6th week, the big week of committees) and then it will go to Education Committee again in 8th for it's 'final reading' if you will. In line with the Council mandate I've been promoting the reports recommendations every way I can, including chatting to the Master of St Peters in the middle watching of a 6 Nations game in the pub. There seems to be a feeling that mentoring yes, residential that focuses on flagged students no. I think Council's policy on this issue this is still right, even after hearing all the arguments.

Leading on students as partners

Listening, Leading (and hopefully Delivering) on feedback and collections.

There's a motion to Council today about collections proposed by Sara, JCR President of St Hugh's and seconded by me. So look out for that. This motion is to raise awareness of the issue because the motion asks for the recommendations to be discussed in colleges so JCR officers are going to be instrumental to delivering better collections. The Annexe, which is attached to the motion, is going to Senior Tutor's Committees and was developed after consultation and feedback with students, especially JCR Presidents and Academic Affairs Officers. I'm in the process of getting in touch with Senior Tutors to hear what currently goes on in their college and to see if they have any problems with the paper, in an attempt to make it more likely to be supported at STC next week.

Students as Partners- Student Led Teaching Awards

Teaching Awards is taking over. They're going to be a massive OUSU project and they're going to be incredible. The speed at which they're moving forward and coming together is astonishing, it shows how quickly student run initiatives can run. Over the past two weeks I've mostly been attending an NUS event on running student union Teaching Awards; working really closely with the designer on getting the publicity looking incredible; getting the website up and running including doing the filming for the videos on the website. This was great morning yesterday, a massive thank you to the 8 students that came to the filming. Look out for the website, which will be launching soon.

Students as Partners- Representation

After taking a paper I wrote, following on from a paper last year from David Barclay, to the Joint Consultative Committee with Student Members about student representation a working group has been set up! This working group will consider how to work on student representation in departments that is a key way that students can really shape their education. We spoke briefly about this in PresCom and I'll be recruiting presidents, Divisional Board reps, academic affairs reps and JCC reps over the next few weeks and into next term.

Misc

NSS

The university put quite a lot of store on OUSU in getting the response rate to 50%. Without the work that falls on me and on the incredible JCR presidents, who have been wonderful in promoting this to their common rooms, I doubt we would get to the 50% that we do really need. Some of the college response rates have shot up in some cases.

University Committees

There have been quite a few big ones since we last met, namely- University Council, Education Committee, Student Number Planning Committee and Admissions Committee

Coming up between now and 7th Week Council

Launch and the opening of nominations for Teaching Awards!

6th Week: the week of committees

Internal OUSU stuff...

PresCom

Complaints and Appeals working group!

Pilot of inclusion of OUSU sabbs on Departmental Reviews

Daniel Stone

VP (Charities & Community)

Dear Council,

I don't know what's freaking me out the most - Having a mid-February snowball fight, the five impending RAG blind dates I have to go on this week or the fact that I'm over half way through my council reports for this year! As always if you'd like me to expand on anything written below please email me at charities@ousu.org

Community

Last week the OUSU Chief Exec and I appointed 7 Student Community Wardens, three to work in Jericho and four in East Oxford. The Wardens bring a range of skills and experiences to the role and I'm certain they will serve us well.

- Last Wednesday was the latest meeting of the Oxford Student Community Group. We discussed housing and a proposal for a citywide forum to discuss building 'stronger community' in Oxford. In the next meeting in mid-March we will be forming a strategy for coping more effectively with the student changeover period.
- I'm now moving into the final stages of the Safety Bus Review. After well over 200 responses to the online survey and visits to around 10 Common Rooms I'm going to begin analysing the data in the hope that it leads to some meaningful conclusions. I'm holding a focus group on Tuesday afternoon from 3.30pm in OUSU to discuss some of the results - please let me know if you'd like to attend.
- Hopefully you would have all received an invite from Councillor Mark Mills to the next City Centre Area forum taking place on Wednesday 22nd February at 7pm in the Town Hall. It's a chance to speak directly to City Councillors about issues to do with housing and student-life in Oxford. Please RSVP to cllrmmills@oxford.gov.uk so we have an idea of numbers.

- Also, tomorrow (16th Feb) at 4.30pm in the Oxford Hub building, there is a focus group to discuss police engagement with Common Rooms and student volunteers. If you'd like to attend please drop me an email.

Charity

Nominations for the selected RAG charities closed last Thursday and the shortlist will be published in time for next week's election. Please encourage people in your Common Rooms to vote in the poll, which will be open from Tuesday to Thursday of 6th Week.

- On Thursday 4th week there was a Graduate Charity Reps meeting and formal in Queen's College. The meeting was extremely productive and allowed reps to work collaboratively and in concert with OUSU and RAG to plan events specifically for graduate common rooms.
- All over Oxford people have been paired up as part of RAG Blind Date. If you've missed out this time you'll have to wait another whole year for cupid to find you...
- RAG Club Nights are every Saturday in No.9. I'll ask again... If you haven't been there yet, what are you waiting for?

Environment and Ethics

Another date for your diary is Saturday 3rd March - the date of the 'Ethical Careers Speaker Event', a joint event between OUSU, the Careers' Service and the Oxford Hub. It promises to be an essential event for students interested in a career outside of the ABCs of Accounting, Banking and Consultancy (although representatives from these sectors may still be in attendance)

Since last Council I have:

- Met with Oxford Brookes, Oxford City Council and a number of charities to formalise an end of year recycling scheme. We've now abandoned door-to-door collections and are hoping to find central locations to house a recycling drive at the end of Trinity.
- Continued work with Environment and Ethics Reps and the University Sustainability Team to adopt College Sustainability policies. I've written a draft policy to go to Domestic Bursars and things are progressing well.

Also, the Environment and Ethics Committee is holding elections on Thursday 5th Week for Chair, Secretary and Social Sec. Please come along if you're interested!

Living Wage

The final date for your diary is Thursday 6th Week (23rd Feb). The Oxford University Living Wage Forum is going to be AWESOME!! Confirmed speakers include Donald Hirsch, Head of Income Studies at the Centre for Research in Social Policy, Jane Wills, fellow of Queen Mary, University of London and Rhys Moore, Director of the Living Wage Foundation.

Last week I had a very encouraging meeting with the Pro Vice Chancellor for Personnel and Equality, who said that a number of departments are now actively considering whether or not to implement a Living Wage. The FOI requests from the NHS showed that their lowest-paid outsourced workers were on £7.11 per hour; a much greater wage than those employed by the University.

PART TIME OFFICERS

Nick Cooper

Academic Affairs Officer

Evening Council,

Hope everyone is surviving 5th Week blues without too much hassle. This has been something of a busy fortnight since the last Council, but I've still managed to fit in some OUSU-related work. I have just been filmed while talking about how important it is for students - undergraduate and postgraduate - to participate in the Teaching Awards. It's great to reward good teaching, and a fantastic part of feedback, which is so important in making Oxford a great place to live and study.

I am also now on the University's Clubs and Rules Committees - if you have any particular issues relating to clubs, or certain other University regulations, including on "trashing" after exams, do let me know. Other than that, have a great 5th week!

Emily Cousens

Access & Admissions Officer

Hi Council,

The last couple of weeks have been pretty full of exciting Access events.

Firstly we had the University's first ever Access Fair: a showcase of all the wonderful access work going on across Oxford that was a great success. Harriet Green deserves huge recognition, as this was her brainchild and something that I hope will now be part of the Oxford annual calendar and grow from strength to strength. The panel discussion was at full capacity and mingling and showcasing afterwards was enthusiastically going on for hours.

Last Wednesday I travelled to Parliament along with some other JCR access reps and people who had been involved in UNIQ summer schools. We got to talk to MPs and Lords about the access work that is going on at Oxford, in particular highlighting the success of UNIQ.

Last Monday Mike Nicholson, head of admissions gave a talk to access reps highlighting the stats and facts behind the admissions myths. This was really informative and if anyone wants to know more then feel free to ask!

Finally I would just like to mention the success of the Target Schools shadowing scheme and say a huge well done to Lauren Kreamer and Thomas Helfer for the work they put into making this run smoothly and effectively. Participants have emailed back saying how much they got out of it which is really the best form of feedback we can hope for.

Oliver Gleeson

Community Outreach & Charities Officer

I hope everyone is having a happy 5th Week!

Over the past two weeks I have been busy at a number of meetings as well as organising events for RAG.

On the charity side, I attended a Graduate Charity Reps meeting and dinner where we discussed how to increase grad involvement in RAG and the idea of putting on specific events targeted at grad students.

I have also been organising Oxford's Got Talent, a really exciting event happening THIS Sunday (19th February) at the Oxford Union Debating Chamber. Tickets are only £5 and it's a great chance to support your college, see the best talent Oxford has to offer and also support charity in the process!

On the community side, I recently attended a meeting at the Town Hall discussing communications surrounding May Day. This important event for Oxford requires careful planning and consideration by many interested parties, who all met last Thursday to discuss requirements. Overall, Oxford City Council predicts it will be an excellent event and they would like to repeat the message that it is stupid and dangerous to jump off Magdalen Bridge!

I have also begun discussions with other OUSU exec members in order to work closer together on issues that affect OUSU students and will update Council in the coming weeks.

As always, my email address is communityandcharity@ousu.org and I urge anyone who wants to get involved to get in touch.

Oliver

Beth Hanson-Jones

Environment & Ethics Officer

I am still working on setting up the swap shop, and am now in the process of getting in contact with both the OxStu and Oxide to see if they could help in running it in any way. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like the paper will be prepared in time for 6th week environment panel, however I will put it in first one of next term. I have also been working with the Environment and Ethics committee to run the elections, which will be taking place this Thursday. If you have any questions about the swap shop, the elections, or anything else then feel free to get in contact. My e-mail is eande@ousu.org.

Jess Pumphrey

LGBTQ Officer

I have been attempting to ensure that the campaign runs, offering support to college reps who are trying to get their college to fly a rainbow flag for queer history month. I have finalised the lists of events for queer history month - these are up on posters, Facebook and the weekly student mailouts.

David Butler

Rent and Accommodation Officer

As stated in my previous report, I attended the Student Community Partnership meeting alongside the President and the VP C&C. At the meeting, we have a presentation about the HMO licensing scheme. The scheme appears to be progressing well with very good take up of the licence.

I am continuing to work with the President on rent negotiation preparation and will be hosting a rent breakfast in 6th week. I have finished the updating of the Rent Negotiation Pack for 2012 and this will be available soon.

I will be meeting with the Common Room Support officer and the Community Outreach officer to discuss the areas in which our roles overlap including my manifesto aim of getting Neighbourhood Action Groups and Local Area Forums interacting with colleges and students.

Clara Ferreira

Graduate Women's Officer

Hi Council,

Recent progress has mainly revolved around the Athena Swan awards.

1) Increasing the awards visibility and pushing for student engagement in the process
Wrote an article, together with Yuan Yang, that came out in the Biochemistry Society journal Phenotype in week 3.

2) Athena Swan/Graduate Provision discussion in the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics
Held a consultation, together with the DPAG graduate student representatives Eleanor Grant and Jessica Tan, in the presence of the department head, dwelling on Jim O'Connell's findings from the PGR provision review, and attempting to determine possible ways in which the Department and the Division can better provide for graduate students needs. The problems and solutions discussed in this consultation will feed into the Athena Swan graduate student consultation, and questionnaire development.

3) Creating a working group to determine the common issues within the Medical Sciences Division

I am planning a consultation with student representatives in the Medical Sciences departments, as well as the representatives in the Athena Swan committees, to determine the common issues that have arisen within this process. More on this later in term.

James Raynor

Common Room Support Officer

Hi Council,

I feel I've had a fairly productive couple of weeks and this is what I've been up to and what I'm planning.

- The briefing note I promised on Sky contracts has been sent out to MCR and JCR Common Room Presidents to look over.
- We had another good OUSU Reps meeting where information on the up-coming NUS conference was discussed.
- CRIS should now be accesible for all new Presidents.

I'm going to be taking a stance on the number of committees OUSU has. I'm going to be having discussions with Martha about how we can make OUSU a little leaner and less beaurocratic, without limiting peoples access to the organization. In-fact it was the consensus at the OUSU Reps meeting that a simpler organization would be more attractive for people to become involved in. Also I will be discussing the length of term limits and the problem we have at the moment for elections in council.

If there's anything you'd like to discuss with me feel free to get in touch at commonrooms@ousu.org

Best,

James

Sarah Pine

Women's Officer

Evening council,

The women's campaign has been engaging on women's intellectual experiences: we've developed specific actions to further the case of women writers and academics. This is directed at supporting women's contributions to academia, and furthering the case of specific female authors' pieces of work.

We also held a poetry evening, focusing on gender and women's writing as our theme. It was a very successful yet relaxing evening.

Yours,

Sarah