

OUSU

reports to council

5th week trinity term 2011

David Barclay

President

Hey,

2nd last Council ever, but no signs of OUSU winding down for the year just yet!

No Confidence

Campaign is really kicking off now. Launched the website – www.noconfidence.org.uk which is now gathering support at an awesome rate. Started a Twitter campaign, lots of press work, plenty of liaising with quite big dogs in the political world and a healthy bit of cajoling of academics. Next Tuesday is going to be massive...

Alternatives to Consumerism

Continued working with the Assessor on setting up a joint project looking at alternatives to consumerism and how to understand the teacher-student relationship in the 21st century. If you're interested get in touch!

Organisation

- Chaired OUSU's 3rd ever Trustee Board meeting which was hugely successful, we'll be producing a report of our work for next Council so look out for that.
- Attended the budget challenge meeting for next year which went well.
- Ploughed on with the elections promotion campaign which I think is a really exciting development for OUSU.
- Took part in the Bye-laws teach in.
- Helped appoint a new communications officer.

Common Room Support

- Attended MCR Prescom (till past 10pm...)
- Spoke at 5 Common Room meetings on No Con and OUSU Elections.
- Held several individual rent and College finance meetings.
- Chaired the 2nd very successful JCR Rent Summit.
- Attended JCR Prescom at Keble and showed commitment by staying until Wahoo.
- Boned up some more on VNI.

Other

- Took part in a couple of really successful events to put students in touch with the Student Support Development team.

Katharine Terrell

VP (Women)

Hello council,

Things I have done since 3rd week council:

WomCam

- Some great policy passed on SlutWalks, anti-abortion pregnancy advisors, entz, female genital cutting, and more (lots of which are at council today!)
- Started planning end of term activities around 'Love Your Body' including screening of film 'Orgasm, Inc.'
- We're looking for new committee members – let me know if you're interested!

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Student Advice Service

- catching up with paperwork
- some new info requests
- Contributed to Tom's review of the service

Meetings:

- OSSSL board
- Gender Equality Scheme Steering group, where I submitted a paper about the OUSU Finals Forums that will go to Undergraduate Panel to encourage departments to take on their own initiatives to tackle the gender gap at finals.
- JCR PresCom
- Bye-Laws 'teach-in'
- Met with Union women's officer on working together

Misc:

- been interviewed for a film commissioned by the university about women at Oxford
- been interviewed by a PhD candidate researching feminism
- went to a talk in London about UN women and the Godmothers campaign.
- Spoke at St Hilda's JCR about running for part-time and sabb exec positions.
- Started handover planning with Brona (CEO) and other sabs
- Started planning a workshop for college staff on supporting students experiencing harassment.
- Been scrutinised.

Beth Evans

VP (Graduates)

Bye-Laws Teach-In – external trustee Richard Jackson is leading a project to review and revise our bye-laws, and generally tidy them up. We had a lengthy meeting to discuss this.

Meeting with ex- VP Grads Sarah Hutchinson to discuss her recent work at the Oxford Learning Institute regarding postgraduates and supervisors. Discussed how to take this forward in producing documentation and guides for postgrads with regards to their supervision.

Grad Mocks – have been a massive success this term. We had over 80 people turn up to the last session alone, with over 120 signed up to the session. Exam Schools are keen to hold them again as it's clear there's a demand from students and that they're finding them useful. Thanks to James Sago for bringing this to my attention in the first place!

Meeting with Toby Whiting regarding student provision for incoming students accepted to the new school of government. Had some really useful information to share, a productive meeting.

Completion of Teaching Review – completed more focus groups, writing up and now distribution. Again, lots of credit due to Jonny for the huge amount of work he's put in to this.

Casework – lots.

Graduate Committee of Conference of Colleges – with the splendid PGT Review paper from OUSU as the obvious highlight of the agenda.

Education Committee – with a pre-meeting with Sally Mapstone and Richard Hughes. Discussion of QAA particularly interesting.

Meeting of OUSU's Trustee Board – a success.

OUSU Executive Meeting

Meeting with International Students Campaign – to discuss a motion regarding International Student Officers in Common Rooms. This is a really important issue which we hope to spread out to Common Rooms.

Scrutiny Committee! Scrutinised.

University Council – long, with a pre-session on the University's interaction with Medical Schools.

Tom Perry Opportunities)	VP	(Welfare	&	Equal
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Hello Council,

I hope 5th week is going well! I wish all those with exams the best of luck. If anyone in your common room has any questions about exam arrangements, medical certificates etc. please let them know about the Student Advice Service.

Since the last council I have been up to:

- I met with Andrew and Tanja (the SWD Officer and the Chair of the SWD Campaign) to start planning Disability Awareness Week. This will take place in 6th week of MT and will hopefully build on the success of last year. This was followed up with a meeting with Pete Quinn, Head of the DAS, who is providing a lot of support for the campaign.
- We finished the job description for the Student Advisor and adverts have now gone out. We hope to appoint before the end of this term ready for them to start over the summer.
- Met with a few people who were thinking of running for Welfare officer in their Common Room elections. I'm always happy to speak to enthusiastic people who want to know more about the welfare systems in the University. If anyone in your common room approaches you please pass on my email address.
- Attended the final meeting of the SpLD working group. The group has signed off on some exciting recommendations that will greatly benefit students with SpLDs in Oxford. Not wanting to put the cart before the horse I will wait for PRAC and Education committee to sign off on them before giving any details. My successor Seb will hopefully be able to share the good news next term.
- The whole sab team spent a day with our external legal trustee on what has been rather unimaginatively coined the 'bye-laws project'. This is basically a move to get all our governing documents in order.
- OSSL Board met for the first time this term. We discussed publications and Freshers' Fair amongst other things.
- I attended my final meeting of the Health and Safety Consultative Committee. Items on the agenda included the number of eye injuries since the last meeting (one involving a rogue tissue...) and a discussion on the use of latex gloves.
- On Friday we had a Trustee Board meeting, mainly discussing finances and the long-term strategy for OUSU.
- When not in meetings I've mainly been doing casework. The start of term surge has quietened a little, and we are always happy to see any student who needs information or advice.
- Finally I've been working on the Student Advice Service Report for the year. This report goes to several University Committees and is our chance to show the University the work we do. It is also a good opportunity to tell the University/Colleges where we think there is room for improvement.

Alex Bulfin	VP (Access & Academic Affairs)
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4 weeks to go and the race is on to get things finished up and ready to handover at the end of term – much of which won't be of interest to Council. But here are a few things...

- Attended meetings of University Council, the Language Centre, Joint Sub-Committee with Student Members and Student Number Planning Sub-Committee among others.
- Made a representation to the University's Strategic Plan Review and Implementation Group.

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- The Target Schools Strategic Review is nearly finished and is out for consultation at present. A final version of the report and an accompanying planning document will be presented to Council in 7th week for ratification.
- I have assisted with modelling various forms of bridging and foundation provision for the University as part of a working group.
- Target Schools' volunteer database was formally launched to colleges across the University – a further demonstration for college access staff will take place this week.
- Spoke at a student Access Forum at the Union about the size and shape of the University in relation to access.
- There has been a steady stream of casework through the Student Advice Service, mainly working on long-standing cases but also with an increasing number of queries coming in regarding exams and prospective student enquiries.
- Took part in a session on drafting new OUSU Bye-Laws as well as presenting papers at the main Trustee Board meeting and a meeting of OUSU's commercial arm, OSSSL.

Daniel Lowe

VP (Charities & Community)

Hello council!

A brief one this week as I spent two days away from the office (and also no more rides on the safety bus)

E&E

- E&E garden party Thursday evening in magdalen, email eande.events@ousu.org if you want to come there will be food and fun times.
- Currently finishing off the recycling audits. I personally have done Wolfson and Exeter and spent a productive morning setting up appointments with bursars.
- E&E reps handbooks set to be finished by the end of term
- Common Room Environment and Ethics Database (CReeD) set to be done by the end of term.
- New blog posts up on our website <http://ee.ousu.org> and follow us on twitter ousueande

RAG

- Megaraid to Cardiff raised over £1000.
- Tonight RAG does comedy @ the Union Oxford Revue v Cambridge Footlights, it'll be a hoot.
- RAG will be selling ice cream @ summer Vllls from Hilda's boathouse on long bridges and from Corpus boathouse on the Chch side.

Community

- No NAGs (apologies sent to Summertown – clash) or area committees but plenty afoot for living wage, but I'll let Sarah talk about that.
- Big sad times coming from the council housing plan, see the upcoming motion (and a big thanks to Jack for mandating me to do something, I normally mandate myself).
- Helped build links with Oxford Brookes by attending their ball and seeing S Club live. Our noble chair Adam Tyndall was also in attendance.

General

- Attended Aldwych group (the SUs of the Russel Group) in Imperial for two day meeting on International Students, Postgrad Issues and the No Confidence Motion. After a long debate I think I managed to convince another 6 or so SUs to back us, woo!
- Will be organising some charity reps and society training in conjunction with the OxHub for fundraising.
- Helped at an all-day teach-in for our new trustees on the OUSU governing docs.

PART TIME OFFICERS

Chris O'Connor
Officer

Common Room Support

Hi Council,

Has, once again, been a busy fortnight, here's a quick round-up of stuff I've done and helped with, as well as a few things to look out for in the upcoming weeks.

- OUSU Rep Training: after people were keen at our last meeting, the next RepCom will include some training by myself and Ugo. It would be great to see as many outgoing and incoming OUSU Reps as possible, as well as the old guard who are in the middle of their terms.
- OUSU/Union Access Forum: was held on Thursday last week and was well received by those who got involved. It was great to hear so many different perspectives, some real policy initiatives and hopefully improved co-ordination of Access efforts in future. Thanks to all who attended and particularly those who spoke
- Rent Negotiations: another Rent Breakfast was held to get a few last minute thoughts on negotiations, and many have now come to an end. Congratulations to all those who have fought for low rises, good luck to those who are still battling. Please get in touch if you would like any further advice

Thanks very much, see you all on Wednesday!
Chris

Sarah Santhosham

Community Outreach & Charities Officer

Hi Council,

The last two weeks have again been busy and full of exciting charity/community ventures. Here's a summarised version of what I've been up to:

Community Organising Workshops:

The second workshop went quite well and had a pleasing turnout. Many thanks to Angus Ritchie for running the session. The last workshop will be run by David Barclay and Sophie Stephens and will be on the practical applications of community organising – 5.30-7.30pm, Wednesday of 6th week, Rainolds Room in Corpus. Please do advertise this to your common rooms and societies.

RAG:

Planning for Summer Twist, the black tie fundraiser, on Friday of 7th week with Daniel is going well; as is the planning for Choose a Challenge in Michaelmas.

Living Wage Campaign:

We're getting quite close to our community action in 6th week. I've been busy organising and bringing together community, charitable and faith groups, as well as students together for this over the past few weeks so everything should go well. This has also involved liaising with external groups, such as London Citizens, and various academics in Oxford, in addition to grass roots research and leading my team. If you'd like to get involved, or know anyone who would, please get in touch at livingwage@ousu.org

Other:

I attended the Environment & Ethics dinner, Campaigners Connected, to meet other campaigners on ethical issues and explore the potential for working together with other student and non-student groups in Oxford. I've been working with Oxfam and advising them with their Living Wage policy, as well as planning an event for next term with Oxfam in collaboration with OxHub. Additionally I've started planning for next term's events and have been meeting with relevant groups to this end.

As ever, please don't hesitate to get in touch at communityandcharity@ousu.org if you have any questions or would like to get involved.

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Sarah

Alastair Marsh

Environments & Ethics Officer

Dear students,

Over the past two weeks, here are the three main focuses of my activity:

- Attended Campaigners Connected: a dinner evening in Vaults & Gardens bringing together members of the University and town community involved with practical work and campaigning on sustainability and ethical issues.
- Scrutinised the Vice-Chancellor's personal commitment to making Oxford University more sustainable at Vice-Chancellor's question time.
- Continued inspections of colleges' recycling facilities: "Recycling With Honours" continues to grow and progress. (I also made a rather good poster involving recycling and Oscar Wilde. Watch this space)

I've also learnt of the recent trend in using energy-reducing initiatives as a bargaining issue in rent discussions. This is a very powerful and practical strategy for improving energy use in colleges, and I will earmark this as something to be disseminated and taken forward next year.

Contact me at eande@ousu.org

Best wishes to all those with exams,
Alastair

Jonny Medland

Grad Academic Affairs Officer

Hey Council,

Since we last met in 3rd week I've mainly been completing the consultation as part of our PGT Teaching Review project including finishing off running focus groups. With Beth Evans I've now produced the report which is on the agenda for discussion today. I think we've got a really comprehensive overview of some of the issues with PGT provision at Oxford as a result of this consultation and for the remainder of my time in office (until the start of next term) I'm going to be working on taking these forward, first with Beth Evans and then over the summer with Jim O'Connell and other members of Exec who are relevant. I urge all of you to read the report - it represents what students on Oxford's PGT programs are saying about academic provision here and it's probably also relevant for those of you thinking of doing graduate study at Oxford! I've really enjoyed working on the project and for the rest of term I'm going to be balancing working on it with doing my degree. Other stuff I've done includes meeting with Divisional reps about improving postgraduate academic representation at Oxford. There's a motion about this on the agenda today and I hope we can make progress on it quickly in light of other, similar discussions which have happened before.

Let me know if you've got any questions, either in Council or via gradacaff@ousu.org.

Jonny

Tania Beard

Grad Women's Officer

I have had a fantastic experience as Graduate Women's Officer this year. Starting off with a colourful bang at the start of Hilary Term, I co-ordinated a 'This is what a feminist looks like' poster campaign inspired by the Fawcett Society. The results can be seen here: <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/23988438/feministA2-2.pdf>.

On a more regular basis, I was pleased to create a fortnightly feminist reading circle at Wadham which attracted a score of new faces and proved fertile ground for debate. We read extracts from Greer's 'The Female Eunuch', texts on The Philosophy of Sexuality and the post-modern socialist feminist 'Cyborg

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Manifesto' by Haraway. Alongside this I had the pleasure to run a fortnightly 'Sex and the Cinema' film series with Dr. Maria Donapetry to explore the nebulous territories of fluid gender roles, sexuality, masculinities and femininities, love and of course, sex. Hilary Term came to a close at the NUS Women's Conference in Oxford this year where I accompanied the VP Women and Women's Officer as representatives of the diverse aspects of women's lives at Oxford University.

Trinity term began with a special Women's Campaign speaker session and forum for discussion about Female Genital Cutting (FGC) at Merton College. I invited three speakers from two organisations, the Orchid Project and Daughters of Eve, to present their stories to the fifty people that attended - a great success! At the end of the session we passed a unanimous vote to support these organisations which is now enshrined in WomCam policy. I hope that WomCam's links with them will continue. The Cherwell wrote a review which can be found here: <http://www.cherwell.org/news/oxford/2011/05/14/ousu-votes-to-help-end-genital-cutting>.

Aside from the events I have been running, I have been an integral part of the Women's Campaign Committee, attending weekly discussion sessions and sending out mailouts when necessary. I have learnt so much about feminism this year, the girls have been fantastic and I hope WomCam will always be such a success.

Laura Hancox

Health & Welfare Officer

Hello Council

I am currently working with Tom Perry to organize the pre-Fresher's week training for new JCR presidents, welfare reps and other committee members which shall take place at the end of 7th week this term and probably again in 0th week of Michaelmas.

I've also started considering more that could be done for World Aids Day that will be taking place next term, for which I would like to organize a collaborative charities and welfare thing, helping to raise sexual health awareness while also raising money for charity. Please get in touch at healthandwelfare@ousu.org if you have any ideas or would like to get involved!

Finally, over the next couple of weeks I will hopefully work towards ensuring that each college is aware of, and has plans in place for, international students arriving early in Fresher's week, plus potentially a university-wide event also being planned. Again, if you have any recommendations or would like to be involved, drop me an email.

Thanks,
Laura x

Kate Colliver

LGBTQ Officer

Heya,

Recent efforts have been focusing on pushing two campaigns; It Gets Better and the Genderless campaign.

The It Gets Better project is moving towards action time. We have been meeting every Thursday at 5pm in OUSU (anyone interested is welcome) to discuss the tone and the content of the film, as well as the practicalities of shooting it. At this stage, we've got a game plan and the loan of some cameras. Filming will be taking place in Green Templeton College, from 8.30pm Tuesday 6th week. We have also begun the process of contacting old members in order to present a more long-term view of how the lives of LGBTQ people progress after leaving university.

The Genderless campaign motion has been successfully passed in several common rooms (inc. Queen's, Brasenose, Univ). The motion includes basic proposals for making trans people more comfortable within their JCR or MCR. It's very simple to achieve, so it'd be great to see more common rooms take that step towards equality. The campaign is also going to go on to speak to the University about what can be done on a wider scale.

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I have also attended OU LGBTQsoc drinks, elections and brunch in my capacity as Female Welfare. In the elections there were three candidates standing for President, and it was a close race. So close, in fact, that there was a tie and a second round of elections will be held soon. I would encourage all members of OU LGBTQsoc to attend and vote.

All the best,

Katie

Andrew Dunne

SWD Officer

In my capacity as SWD Officer I have begun planning for Disabilities Awareness Week, (DAW) with Tom (VP Welfare) and Tanja (SWD Campaign Chair) and will be continuing with this planning throughout the term and over the Summer in preparation for DAW in 6th Week of MT 2011. I will be meeting with Peter Quinn, (head of the Disability Advisory Service, DAS) in the future to co-ordinate the staff and student efforts for the DAW. Tanja, Tom, and I also hope to begin to re-start the SWD Campaign meetings this term and into next term.