

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

5th Week Council Trinity 2017

Jack	Hampton	President	Received
Sandy	Downs	VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities	Not Received
Orla	White	VP Women	Received
Marina	Lambrakis	VP Graduates	Received
Eden	Bailey	VP Access & Academic Affairs	Late
Beth	Currie	VP Charities & Community	Received

SABBATICAL OFFICERS

Jack Hampton – President

Dear Council,

In the last two weeks, I have:

Launched my academic structures enquiry into the link between Undergraduate academic structures (like workload, type of assessment and set work), student stress and academic attainment. This addresses two of my manifesto pledges regarding student workload and reforming an academic system which currently “has no give”. Furthermore, I said during my campaign that I would be a ‘proactive’ president and this piece of work is exactly that. It will lead to students identifying the parts of their course which burden them without great perceived or actual value added. This will hopefully drive our lobbying on undergraduate degrees for years to come. If you’re a second year, please fill out and share this survey

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<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2MJD2TH> Description:
<https://www.facebook.com/images/emoji.php/v8/fcc/1/16/1f4dd.png> 

Achieved a major commitment from the university to investigate the efficiency and fairness of its space utilisation – I argued that we should sort out our own shop before we try to achieve cut backs that effect staff and students

I have attended a congregation debate on the Employer Justified Retirement Age which will have impacts on those students with ambitions to pursue academia in oxford

I have supported two JCR presidents with Paper writing and one common room with coming up with an approach to Lad Culture

And I have supported the development of our next 5-year strategy in the area of community

Also, I went to the OUSU teaching awards which were sick

Ask me questions in person at council or by email if there is anything in the above you don’t understand or have an opinion on.

Eden Bailey – Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs)

Highlights included:

- OUSU Teaching Awards which Marina and I had the privilege to host and help co-ordinate the many student panels and volunteers for. We had an astounding 895 nominations and presented 25 awards across 7 categories. Students did an excellent job helping present awards, and also sitting on panels to choose the shortlists and winners. Thank you to everyone involved! It was fantastic to celebrate and exhibit some of the excellent work that goes on across this University.
- This fortnight has also seen some big meetings of the highest level of University governance, including University Council and Congregation. At Congregation, Marina gave an excellent speech in debate surrounding the Employer Justified Retirement Age and the impacts on students at all levels and early career academics who were not otherwise represented in these discussions, but affected hugely by this issue.
- We held the first official Class Act Committee meeting! There are excellent things afoot, and working parties are already meeting to discuss various specific projects, about which you will hear soon!
- I met with JCR academic reps to discuss the academic structures survey.

- I've also been working with other staff and sabbs on OUSU's new strategy, and specifically the education strand of this.
- I presented a paper on Student Helpers at Admissions which I have been researching and working on for some time at Admissions Committee. It passed with approval and positive reception, and I will present the paper this week to the Heads of House from the Colleges. I am really glad this issue is being taken seriously, and sure that this will have a positive impact both on current students who help at admissions interviews, and applicants. If you'd like to talk about this in further detail, please do get in touch!
- We've had a huge push on Voter Registration – thanks to Beth for her amazing work, and thanks to all who've done a #pledgetoreg!
- I attended the University's Inspirational Teachers Awards on Friday – it was fantastic to speak to current students whose teachers have hugely impacted their decision to apply to Oxford, and meet those teachers alongside various people involved in admissions across the University. Hopefully these conversations will be helpful in guiding future initiatives!
- I've spent a lot of time organising the Class Act launch event! This will take place at the Old Fire Station on 30th May at 18:30, and all are welcome to attend. There is no dress code, and should be a celebratory event at which we hope everyone will feel welcome.

Beth Currie – Vice-President (Charities & Community)

Hey Council,

Graduates in Employment

Marina and I are continuing our work on graduate students in employment and we have had meetings with William James (Pro Vice Chancellor Planning and Resource Allocation), Sarah Whatmore (PVC Education), and Emma Potts (Academic Registrar) about the best way to move forward in supporting grad students in their capacity as employees of the collegiate university. Marina has written a scoping paper that is going to JSCECSM to help us plan our next steps.

#PledgeToReg #GE2017

This Monday was the deadline to register to vote in the upcoming General Election and we had nearly 1000 #PledgesToReg in the week before the deadline! Hertford came out victorious, but the real prize has been delivered to each of us in the form of our polling card!! So make sure you hit the streets campaigning, share your favourite election memes, and turn up on the June 8th to vote!!

If you don't think you will be able to get to the polling booth yourself (out of the country on a year abroad? Got back to back exams?) don't worry because you have until 5pm on the 31st May to apply for a proxy vote. Here is more information on getting a proxy vote, including a download link for the form to apply to vote by proxy: <https://www.yourvotematters.co.uk/how-do-i-vote/voting-by-proxy>

And if you are voting in Oxford East, then come along to our parliamentary hustings at the Sheldonian on June 5th:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1316927668425687/>

Community Warden Recruitment

We are going to be recruiting 5 new Community Wardens for next year so if you are interested in helping improve student-community relations in Oxford and getting paid £9/hr while you do it then drop me a line on vpcandc@ousu.ox.ac.uk for more info!

Moving Out and Clear Outs

As the end of term gets closer, and everyone is looking forward to moving home for a bit, moving away forever, or moving to some cool new digs on the other side of town, we have a few campaigns going on so help you move out in the most delightful and ethical way possible.

We are helping support the BHF Pack For Good campaign! More info here - <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/packforgood>

We will also be collecting for the CEF in common rooms!

We will also be encouraging students to review their accommodation on www.movem.co.uk so we can crown source data about the state of private rented accommodation in Oxford.

Stay cool,

Beth

Marina Lambrakis – Vice-President (Graduates)

Hello Council!

Firstly, once again, my apologies for not reporting in 3rd week. Trinity term has been ridiculous in terms of workload, and things just got away with me. But we have wonderful news:

~*~*~ !! I HAVE A SUCCESSOR !! ~*~*~

Marianne Melsen was elected in the VP (Graduates) by-election last Thursday. I'm really looking forward to working with her and passing the mantle in 10th week - I'm sure she'll do a fantastic job, and I know I'm leaving the VP (Graduates) portfolio in capable hands. Congratulations Marianne ^_^

I'll try and keep this concise, but there is so much to say in terms of what I've been up to in the last couple of weeks!

Graduate employment

This project has been coming on leaps and bounds. Beth and I have been meeting with various stakeholders in the University to make sure we've got a rounded view of it, and everyone has been so supportive. We've written a paper that we're presenting to Joint SubCommittee of Education Committee with Student Members (JSCECSM, to you and me) next week, with some high-level points for discussion that will form the basis of our campaigning document. We'll be collating examples of best practice, and setting out what we think departments and colleges should be doing for graduates who work. The toolkit is also toddling along - we'll have that finalised soon!

On this note, I gave a speech to Congregation last week on the Employer Justified Retirement Age, which will be accessible in due course in the University Gazette. I opposed the resolution to abolish the EJRA at Oxford. I set out the landscape for DPhils who are hoping to go into early career academia, making the point that there are so few jobs available to us here, and how this could be alleviated by a higher turnover of jobs. I also spoke a bit about other relevant factors to the EJRA, such as facilitating staff diversity and encouraging a more accessible education (in terms of curriculum and pedagogy), both of which have been at the forefront of OUSU's campaigning for a long time.

Graduate suspension & welfare

In the last couple of weeks I've commissioned a data review from the Welfare Survey to extract and analyse the data from graduates who have suspended, and I've also had some really useful stats from the Student Advice Service. Along with the qualitative data from the focus groups I ran, I'll take this to the working group on graduate suspension. Grad Presidents' Committee are also really keen to support on this work, and we've discussed how they might get involved.

More broadly, it came to my attention that the graduate data from the Welfare Survey was never formally analysed at all, due to it being a smaller dataset. I've spoken to the CEO and we've put aside some money to do this - grad welfare has to

be a priority, and if we have so much data that we've already collected, we may as well do something with it!

On peer support, I've met with Anne Ford (convenor of the Peer Support Programme in the Counselling Service), and have more meetings scheduled, with the aim of putting a survey out to graduate Peer Supporters to explore how Peer Support might (or in some cases, already does!) function in a department setting. There's a fuller review of the programme planned for next term, and this will feed into that broader project. I've also been supporting a couple of course reps locally who are trying to lobby for Peer Support to be introduced in their departments - if you're interested, get in touch!

Lastly, I'm working on the emotional wellbeing in research workshops I'd like to reprise from last year, aiming for 7th week.

Other things I have done (in addition to many many committees, meetings, etc):

- I took part as the student representative on the review of St Benet's Hall
- Ran an Exam Prep session for grads together with Exam Schools
- Chaired by-election hustings
- Attended College Welfare Forum and presented grad welfare issues
- Supported course reps (fighting fee increases, improving teaching systems, improving department welfare)
- Met with student parents, amended the StudentsPlus constitution
- Compered the Teaching Awards!

K I'm done now. Any questions/comments/light relief in the form of fluffy animals, you can get in touch on vpgraduates@ousu.ox.ac.uk. Until next we meet (which shall be the last before I hand over the throne),

Marina

Sandy Downs - Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

Orla White - Vice-President (Women)

Sex Worker Support

Recently, I presented a paper to the University's Sub-Committee for Student Wellbeing which highlighted some of the findings from my survey of Oxford students currently or formerly engaged in sex work. I also put across the views of the Student Union, as informed by our pro-decriminalisation and pro-sex worker rights policy. Some of the conclusions I presented to the University included:

- The impact that the 'taboo' upon work in general, especially for undergraduate students, has upon all students, and student sex workers specifically.
- OUSU's view that no student should be penalised or disciplined simply on the basis of engaging in sex work, and that were any such disciplinary action to occur anywhere in the collegiate university, OUSU would strongly condemn it and stand alongside the student in question.
- The importance of referring to sex worker-led organisations and unions, and of avoiding organisations that advocate for further criminalisation of sex workers.

I'm also going to get in touch with the NUS Women's Campaign to talk about sharing our resources, and informing them of the conclusions of some of my research and experience this year.

Building on this conclusion, I think in the future OUSU has work to do on getting concrete agreements from the University and colleges to our demands, and in encouraging the build-up of expertise in the counselling service.

I'd like to thank everyone who lent their time and let their feelings be known on the survey. This was an incredibly humbling and exciting piece of work to do and I was really honoured by the level of engagement. Thanks for working with me; I think we've started something really important.

Consent Workshops

It continues to be That Time. I and some volunteers from It Happens Here (thank you so much, Immie and Katt!) are working to train consent workshop facilitators, as well as to run first respondent training sessions. It's a really exciting time, and I'm really enjoying myself. Search consent workshop TT17 on Facebook to get information about when and where the next sessions are so you can come along!

Relatedly, I've been having conversations internally about how to better support my role when consent workshops are going. We've drafted a timeline for next year, including recommendations for eg preparing for press attention – because it's not nice being a few months into the job and having to deal with the Daily Mail snooping around.

Harassment Policy & Procedure

By the time I stand up in front of Council, the University Sexual Violence Working Group will have had several 'break-out' sessions to discuss specific elements of the Universities UK recommendations, including partnership working, communication of policies to students, bystander intervention workshops and centralised reporting systems. We'll also have run a focus group for students on how they feel policies are communicated, and what they want to see more of.

Transgender Policy & Guidance

The new draft of the revised Trans Policy & Guidance came to its first committee recently – it's still very much in draft form, and consultation is ongoing, but it looks like a fantastic place to start from. It's much more inclusive of non-binary and/or genderfluid people, and much clearer and stronger on the specific protections and services the University can offer transgender staff and students. I'm really excited to see how it will develop.

As ever, all questions and comments to vpwomen@ousu.ox.ac.uk.