



## Education Committee

St Andrews Students' Association

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Minutes of the meeting on 17/09/20 (6pm) via MS Teams

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### **Present:**

Amy Gallacher (DoEd), Joseph Horsnell (Arts and Divinity Faculty President), Chloe Fielding (Science and Medicine Faculty President), Abi Whitefield (Postgraduate Academic Convenor), Emma Walsh (DoWell)

Hannah Koegler (Art History SP), Brynne Stewart (Biology SP), Camiel Leake (Chemistry SP), Erik Crnkovich (Classics SP), Ryan Gibb (Computer Science SP), Lowell So (Divinity SP), Belinda Hawes (Earth Sciences SP), Callum Irvine (English SP), Teo Yarkova (Film Studies SP), Imaan Kotadia (Geography and SD SP), Geraint Morgan (History SP), George Watts (International Relations SP), Murray Whyte (Maths SP), Lucy Matthews (Modern Languages SP), Ursula Goldsmith (Music SP), Rachel Neighbour (Philosophy SP), Sarah Johnston (Physics and Astronomy SP), Lindsay Nielsen (Psychology and Neuroscience SP), Elinor Layne (Social Anthropology SP)

Emma Johnston (Arabic/Persian Convener), Maddie Lee (Comparative Literature Convener), Antonia Cahill (French Convener), Eva Halliday (German Convener), Helen Clinton (Italian Convener), Elodie Phillips (Russian Convener), Rohan Date (Spanish Convener)

**Absent with apologies:** Orrin McAleer (Medicine SP)

**Absent without apologies:** Sanjana Ramaswamy (Economics SP), Jeanne Adam (Management SP)

### Introduction to EduCom (Joe)

- Explained that the Faculty Presidents co-chair and will alternate the chairing
- Went through meeting etiquette – microphones off, raise hand function, etc

### Class Rep Update (Amy)

- Lots of problems with the elections portal this week:
  - Several reasons for this
  - Registry would normally do a final check of matriculation but there were problems this year
  - Problems from last year's complications (COVID)
  - IT: 'data freeze' of modules – caused problems with Grad School voting today
- Voting:
  - Keep adding people manually
  - Keep recording it, so we know who might have problems voting
  - We obviously can't manually put in votes
  - Issue raised with registry
- Unfilled positions:
  - This happened last year too
  - Acknowledged the difficulties this year because of COVID
  - All SPs advised to cc in Amy, Joe, Chloe, Stuart and Victoria
  - Nominations will be extended and voting pushed back
  - Logistical considerations of pushing voting back – Amy to speak to CEED
  - **Suggestion: email particular year groups to tell them which positions are unfilled – this has helped in the past**
  - SPs to use judgement when the system uses random punctuation in place of apostrophes (George)
  - Approving candidates is fine (Teo)
  - Postgrad problems (Brynne) – resolved at the end of the meeting
  - Will be collecting feedback at the end of this

### Rector's Election Committee (Emma, DoWell)

- Explained that the Rector chairs University Court and is voted in by students
- Need help coordinating this election, so needs one Sci/Med and one Arts/Div SP to be co-opted onto the committee
- The work can be done from home, as this year's voting will be online
- Good way to get involved in student democracy
- **Elinor and Camiel were co-opted on**

## Postgraduate Representation (Abi)

- Explained that we are trying to improve PG representation at the moment
- Wants to make sure everything is working well in each School
- Acknowledged that it is difficult to get PG students involved and engaged
- SPs' predecessors completed a survey on PG matters:
  - PG students were confused with class rep role
  - They didn't realise they should go to SSCC
  - Are events part of their role? There was confusion here
  - They were attending a lot of meetings, but were unsure about remit?
- Two interns: Amy leading
  - Will be reviewing the system even further
  - Will work this semester
  - Will produce a report at the end of their term
- Trying to make roles as small and refined as possible and reduce time commitments
- Wants to put event organisation responsibilities elsewhere
- Should Schools have PG-specific SSCCs?
- PG reps often have no ways of contacting their cohort
- PG reps are sometimes elected in different ways, and this is being streamlined now
- Abi emailed SPs to ask which roles there are in their Schools
- **PGR elections have been pushed back a few weeks, as most PGR entrants don't start their course until 28<sup>th</sup> September**
- PG training needs reviewing: PGs gave bad reviews of their training
- Disparity in the amount of PG reps in each School – Abi wants at least two positions available per course
- Abi is trying to merge the Executive Class Rep role with the normal class reps roles – DoPGRs had not heard of the Exec position
- General lack of understanding of the PG system and lack of communication
- Acknowledged issues with the PG Convenor position last year
- **We need to check emailing lists to ensure the PG are included in the correct emails sent by SPs (Imaan)**
- Relationship with SPs and PGs (Sarah)
  - Need to be flexible when working with UG and PG students
  - PG don't take the SP seriously
  - Separate PG meetings may bridge this gap

### **Class Rep Expansion Packs (Joe)**

- Schools with large cohorts can easily cover the areas
- Guidance is in the Team and can be emailed out after the meeting (Joe)
- Convenor-specific advice too: freer to do co-options
- Advice on what to do if you choose not to have certain reps is included
- Delegation of positions and responsibilities is up to the SP (Emma)
- Head class reps are not happening (Sarah)
- **Need a meeting with the Modern Languages SP and the Convenors to speak about maybe centralising some roles – will happen next week**

### **EDI class rep surveys (Sarah)**

- All Schools working on EDI issues much more now
- Suggestion that class rep composition affects which issues the School works on (people tend to work on things that affect themselves first)
- Sarah asking SPs to make a short form to give to class reps to find out what they identify as, etc.
- Concerns over use of data (Lindsay)
- Acknowledgement from Sarah that class reps would not be forced to participate and that their data would be anonymous
- The info probably couldn't be published
- Biology has a student BAME committee (Brynne) – might be helpful for other SPs
- Reps might bias the issues that are brought forward to SPs (Sarah)
- **We need to be aware that we aren't always representative of our cohort**

### **Other points (Amy)**

- LGBT groups in Schools – we will organise this more centrally
- BAME education office will join us in a few weeks
- **Amy is considering setting up office hours**

### **Co-options (All)**

- Voting tonight
- The voting form is in the Teams chat

Meeting adjourned.

**Next meeting: Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (6pm) via MS Teams**