Education Committee
St Andrews Students Association

Meeting date: Thursday 28th January 2021 (6pm) MS Teams

Apologies: George Watts (International Relations), Ursula Goldsmith (Music) Ryan Gibb (Computer Science SP), Erik Crnkovich (Classics SP)

Present: Amy Gallacher (DoEd), Joseph Horsnell (Arts and Divinity Faculty President), Iona Baillie (minuting)

Hannah Koegler (Art History SP), Camiel Leake (Chemistry 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), Murray Whyte (Maths SP), Lucy Matthews (Modern Languages SP), Rachel Neighbour (Philosophy SP), Sarah Johnston (Physics and Astronomy SP), Lindsay Nielsen (Psychology and Neuroscience SP), Elinor Layne (Social Anthropology SP), Lowell So (Divinity SP), Orrin McAleer (Medicine SP) Emma Johnston (Arabic/Persian Convener), Maddie Lee (Comparative Literature Convener), Antonia Cahill (French Convener), Helen Clinton (Italian Convener), Elodie Phillips (Russian Convener), Rohan Date (Spanish Convener), Brynne Stewart (Biology SP), Eva Halliday (German Convenor), Kushal Tansania (Graduate SP), Someone's cat

AGENDA

1. Welcome **5 mins**

(Art Div FP)

JH welcomed everyone to Semester 2 EduCom. Academic mitigation methods have been talked about a lot recently and we will try ad cover that in addition to the other items tonight.

2. Library resources presentation and questions **10 mins**

(Amina Shah, Library)

AS (as496) welcomed any comments from SPs. Over Christmas, there were changes to the government guidelines and as the Library follows specific rules for libraries, changes to procedures had to happen. There is no access to the book stock for students so Click and Collect, Scan and Deliver and other online methods are the only services which can operate. There has been cooperation with module coordinators to either make books or scans available where needed. This still presents difficulties for Dissertation students who need a more diverse range of materials. Students in St Andrews can do Click and Collect in a non-contact mode right now, through the window with safety measures to make sure staff and students are safe. Signage etc is being looked at and in general, improvements to services are constantly being looked at.

The Library usually has time to discuss service changes etc with students and staff so that everything runs smoothly but because of the constant changes to rules due to the pandemic, the Library is having to be very reactive. This will mean there are teething problems, so the Library welcomes feedback on what is and isn't working. Browsing books in person will take a long time as books have a 72 hour quarantine period before they are even shelved let alone looked at by students. Academic Liaison etc will help with resources if you are struggling to get resources for eg Dissertations.

One issue is recalls. If someone has a book out, it can't be scanned for others further away who can't use Click and Collect. Now there is a system to recall books for scanning to help this situation.

Study Spaces: St Mary's and Martyr's Kirk are open but the Main Library is closed so it can be used for the services mentioned before. There is hesitancy for reopening services due to the new variants and concerns for safety with the higher transmission rate.

They are working with Estates to open other areas such as Gateway but new guidelines make rules around eg ventilation tighter and all of this just slows things down and creates problems.

The take home message is that the Library is working hard to open things up BUT we all have to obey the stay at home order if at all possible. It is acknowledged that this isn't possible for everyone due to wifi, working environment etc.

There will be updates on the social media platforms and the website. There was a heating issue which led to a 2 day closure and things when this like this happen, they will appear on the website and social media.

AG introduced the idea brought up previously in the chat surrounding UV disinfection of books.

IK and SJ talked briefly on this and the Physics Dept are working on it as an idea right now.

AS welcomed any articles or research on things like this which could help with issues such as quarantining books (as this is such a huge problem for the Library). Hasn't heard of this method but very interesting.

SJ: School libraries often contain print-only journals etc. Can these be scanned for students?

AS: Books are taken from JF Allen regularly to enable this to be done already. If books aren't on the catalogue so can't be found, speak to the Library and they will try and help. Working with estates to see if JF Allen can be opened but, again, the guidelines have slowed everything down and things are changing fast.

SR: Students in the School of Economics are requesting access to the Bloomberg Market Concepts Courses which are very important for their learning and are expensive for students to buy themselves. PGs have access but this would be very useful for UGs.

AS: Hilda McNae is someone to talk to about this.

AS to reach out to Hilda McNae to make aure she has been in communication with the School of Economics

SR: Most US students get this for free and it would be very useful.

JA: The School of Management has access to the Bloomberg Terminals and has the computers with it on.

SR: The main thing students want is the lessons which can be accessed from anywhere.

AG: This is not the end of the discussion. Issues will be flagged in the future so please can SPs keep in touch with Amina, the library and Amy with any problems, feedback or ideas.

AS: The Library is committed to help, please get in touch if needed. There has also been a Thursday reading group, so message if interested.

3. Elections Committee **10 mins** Appendix A

EW: Papers have been sent out on the Elections Committee. Last September, EW coopted one Artdiv and one SciMed president. The same has to be done for the Elections Committee. Rules for reelection were passed on Tuesday and the document will be released soon.

SciMed: Camiel Leake put forward

Artdiv: Teo Yarkova, Lowell So put forward

JH: A form for voting will be circulated and it will be decided tonight/tomorrow.

JH to organise voting for this

TY: Would love to be involved as it was exciting running for SP last year and received a lot of support. Would love to help people out.

LS: Came to the position differently so would be a great way to find out about how it works. Would be interested in the campaigning, publicity, campaign-running etc.

EW: Election committee applications are open until Sunday as well. Think about nudging CRs, reapplying or applying for a FP position!

4. Academic mitigation measures question time **10 mins**

(Director of Education)

JH welcomed questions on the new measures put in place recently.

GM: Regarding communication, it is confusing why the information is only on the website and not in the email meaning people found out about the specifics socially not first hand.

AG: That email was worked on for a long time and it was decided that it was too confusing to explain in a long email. If it was oversimplified there would be people thinking it was just the same as last year. It was done deliberately so people had to seek out the information but at least they would know the whole story. Still not ideal though.

SJ: One thing has come up a few times. People who have got a 0X could S code it to get an 18SP and then remove it to get a normal 18.

AG: This question comes down to an understanding of how the normal S-Coding policy interacts with the new SP-Code policy. The standard S-Coding policy states

that if an S-Code is applied to a module before sitting the exam then, should a reassessment be needed, the resulting grade will be uncapped. Whilst you could apply to S-Code a 0X result retrospectively (in an exceptional case) the new SP-Codes work a little differently in that even though they are applied retrospectively you would not expect them to act in such a way to remove the effects of pre-applied academic regulations (such as grade capping resultant from retrospective declaration of extenuating circumstances, failing of a module or contract cheating). An SP-Code applied to a 0X grade would act to 'remove' the grade from the degree classifier (as outlined in the policy) but would not allow a student to remove the sanctions previously applied.

BS: Lots of emails asking about if the new mitigation measures apply to their courses because of the line mentioning accreditation and staff reaching out.
AG: Students need to be reassured whether the rules apply to their courses and staff need to be quicker in getting this information out there.

JA: Students have been asking the measures apply to S1 grades or just S2.
AG: They apply as long as it is 'a covid affected semester'. This was done so it wouldn't have to be reworked again if there are still effects from COVID on next semester. So S1 modules can be SP coded. You do still have to wait to the summer to SP S1 modules, after the release of results though.

SR: So third and fourth years can retrospectively SP anything from January 2020 to June 2021 and it will come up as SP and not count to the degree?
AG: Yes. You can only retrospectively SP not S code. Your grade shows as normal. Whatever gives you the higher grade classification, it automatically gives you that grade.
SR: And are there no restrictions as to which courses can be SP coded. Eg can you SP required courses?
AG: There is confusion as to courses required for accreditation but there are very few of these and coordinators should be in touch when this is the case. Module coordinators need to be quicker in telling students which modules are like this. Also you have to make sure you don't SP over 50% of your Honours courses.

EL: Can dissertations be SP coded?
AG: Yes, believe so. The only caveat is PGT as theirs is 'already running'.

JH: We can talk about this again.

5. EDI Admissions wording **10 mins** Appendix B

(Physics SP)

SJ: In rewriting some content on the Physics website, the Universities wording for EDI applications sounds a bit dodgy and like it is a fishing statement. This is generally pretty bad and could be contributing to Imposter Syndrome. Have rewritten it for Physics but do others agree that this is bad wording? If so could we all find a better way to word it maybe come up with an EduCom approved version to take to the University.

JH: This can be worked on ahead of a discussion next week?

CI: Agreed that this is poor wording. The Uni admissions pdf from the English website doesn't have that wording – it is better, more inclusive and refers to regulations etc. The only place CI can find this poorer wording is on staff pages. Could they change it to the version on the pdf he found?

GM: Had discussions about this in the History EDI wrt Staff. One point is that there still needs to be something proactive about actively wanting to reach out to a diverse group. Happy to join a working group on this.

SPs interested in being involved, email SJ

6. Study Buddy Scheme update **5 mins** Appendix C

(Art Div FP)

JH: Study Buddy scheme: as of 12.oo, over 210 participants had joined. Some schools have fewer participants that others so can SPs put this in the weekly email? Applications are open till Wednesday now. Can we have 2 SPs to be members of the wellbeing subcommittee to come up with activities, events, tips and tricks for staying well during isolation etc, and email out every week?

SPs interested should email Joe

7. EduCom socials **5 mins**

(Director of Education)

AG: Due to the changes this semester, it would be good to formalise some socials. Fortnightly Educom socials on Wednesdays at 7pmif that would work, let us know if that day is a problem. It would be a chance to relax and probably would start in week 3.

SJ: Wednesday is a dance club night

SPs to email with suggestions on what to do at socials and also if there are days of the week they can't do for the events.

8. EduCom's social media **5 mins**

AG: The Educom Instagram and Facebook are running. Weekly updates from Amy, the FPs and SPs will be posted. The pages are for you as well so if you want to have anything posted message one of the SPs, AG or IB

RN: The username is really long for the Instagram. Can we change this?

JH: We'll try this.

FPs to change name

SJ: Wrt synchronising a calendar – when you post an event on a SP facebook page, an idea would be to make the Educom Facebook page a cohost and then everything will pop up on the Educom page as well.

JH: Good idea. SPs can also put events on the Union Calendar. Might also do profiles from the website. So if anyone has objections to using the photos and blurb from the union website, get in touch.

SPs to get in touch if there are issues with this and to link events to the Educom Facebook

9. AOCB

JH: Can SPs gather feedback on Careers Connect?

SPs to gather feedback

JH: S1 reports due this Sunday. Get in touch if you can't make that date.

SPs to submit reports

AG: Regarding the away day, can SPs like or comment on the padlet for Amy to take forward?

SPs to look at the padlet and like/comment

BS: People have expressed anger about the changes to the academic calendar? The found out about changes via social media and wonder if anything can be changed.

JH: SPs were involved in this last year. It's set in stone now, unfortunately. Its to help Staff with caring responsibilities and brings us in line with school holidays and other Scottish unis.

AG: This passed over the Christmas break and it has been changed for at least a couple of years.

BS: Easter holidays aren't even preserved so that's not ideal for staff.

JH Nothing to be done.

JH thanked everyone for a good meeting.

10. Meeting adjourned: 7.00pm

PAPERS

APPENDIX A – Elections Committee

Owner: Emma Walsh (DoWell)

Election's Committee Overview

Committee Membership:
1. Six Sabbatical Officers (unless running for re-election)
2. Three SRC Nominees
3. Three SSC Nominees
4. 1 Senior Academic Representative - Arts/Divinity
5. 1 Senior Academic Representative - Science/Medicine
6. 1 Representatives of the Athletic Union
7. 1 PG Student
8. 2 subcommittee executive members
9. 4 Further Members external to the Association Councils, of which at least one should be a first year

Committee Roles:

Senior Elections Officer (SEO): The Director of Wellbeing is the Senior Elections Officer unless there are circumstances preventing this. They oversee all aspects of the election and lead on matters involving discipline.

Deputy Senior Elections Officer (DSEO): The DSEOs are the leads on areas of Elections (Events, Administration, Volunteers, and Publicity). They will oversee the function of their areas and delegate to the rest of the committee. They will be co-opted from existing members of the Elections Committee on the first meeting. Choosing to be a DSEO will be a larger responsibility than joining as an ordinary member.

DSEO Events: Responsibilities include organizing the elections events. In the case of the 2021 elections, all events will be run virtually and they must be willing to adhere to Covid guidelines.

DSEO Administration: Responsibilities include ensuring accurate records are kept for Elections Committee and Discipline meetings, as well as the organization of the saelect@ inbox.

DSEO Volunteers: Responsibilities include the operation of the virtual elections office, coordinating members of the committee, and assisting in delegation for other DSEOs.

DSEO Publicity: Responsibilities include publicising all aspects of the Election, including nominations and voting, as well as managing the social media pages.

General Members: The other members of the committee will be assisting the DSEOs when needed and periodically staffing the virtual elections office, meaning they will be monitoring the facebook page, email, and campaign team group chats. The General Members will also be expected to promote the election through social media as well.

Time Commitment:
Each day during the 12 day election period, members of the Elections Committee will have at least a one hour shift in the virtual elections office monitoring emails and media. Some shifts will be busier than others, but it is easy to do other work or reading whilst on shift as well. The DSEOs will have larger time commitments in organizing their respective areas, and general members will be expected to help out when available.

Elections Committee
Duties of Elections Committee

Elections committee will be requested to partake in the following before being formally co-opted to elections committee:

1. Remain impartial at all times, and show no bias toward or against any candidate.

2. Advertise the Elections.

- Share all elections publicity materials.
- Help nudge potential candidates into running anonymously.

3. Assist with staffing the virtual elections office from 10:00-18:00.

- Answer queries on the @saelect email account.
- Provide advice to candidates about how to run a campaign.
- Approve candidate nominations upon receiving them.
- Monitor and update the @SAelect Twitter and @StACouncils Instagram accounts.
- Approve campaign materials which conform with the Election Rules
- Monitor campaign budgets for all candidates.
- Keep all information obtained through Elections Committee confidential.

- Attend evening meetings of the elections committee to discuss any potential rule infractions, and the penalties associated.
- Help run the Elections Week Events.
- Supervise hustings and ensure that they are run fairly and efficiently.

Appendix B – EDI Admissions Wording

Owner: Sarah Johnston (Physics SP)

The current wording approved by the university for admissions is "Applications are particularly welcome from women, people from the Black, Asian, Minority or Ethnic (BAME) communities, and applicants with other protected characteristics who are under-represented in research posts at the University." Every student I've spoken to about this finds this statement to seem 'fishing' and instead of promoting diversity, which is the aim, implies that applications from these groups will be valued solely because of the student's membership of one of these groups.

In physics, I suggested the rewording of "Applications will be considered regardless of the applicant's gender, race, ethnicity, or other protected characteristics in line with the University's policy on equality, diversity, and inclusion." I suspect this isn't the ideal wording for the statement, but I hope you'd agree it has a better tone that that currently used. It would be great to know other SPs thoughts on this issue, and maybe try to find an ideal suggested wording that could be proposed to the university.

Appendix C – Study Buddy Scheme initial proposal and current stats

Owner: Joe Horsnell (Art Div FP)

With students being scattered across the world this semester (at least until Spring Break and possibly for the entire semester), it would be really positive if we could get this scheme up and running in the first week of term. This time round, I think we could be more proactive with using the pairings and making sure people derive more value from their match. I'm expecting a lot more students to sign up for this edition of the scheme, so I might need some help from you both to pair everyone up (obviously this depends on numbers).

Matching criteria
This time around I'd like to primarily pair people based on their School and Year-group (trying to find the closest match possible).

Support from our subcoms
To support the scheme and generate some activities and content for the weekly email to the pairs, I'd like to recruit two School Presidents and two Wellbeing subcommittee members.

Timeline
I'd like to propose the following timeline:

<u>Preparation</u>
(Week -1) Monday 18th - Friday 22nd January 2021
          Prepare the sign-up form (removal of neurodivergence question and preferably gender preference but I'd like to discuss this with you both)

<u>Marketing and sign-ups</u>
(Week 1) Monday 25th January 2021 9am
          Sign-ups open for students (publicity push through multiple channels):

- Union social media channels
- Sabbatical email
- Through Directors of Wellbeing in every school (so they are aware and can direct students)

- School President emails

(Week 1) Friday 29th January 2021 5pm
Sign-ups close and pairing takes place over Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st Jan.

<u>Scheme begins</u>
(Week 2) Monday 1st-Friday 5th February 2021
Task 1 - icebreaker tasks and get-to-know-you activities
(Week 3) Monday 8th-Friday 12th February 2021
Social 1 - pairs encouraged to take part in a social together (organised by Wellbeing?)
Union Week information (Careers)
(Week 4) Monday 15th-Friday 19th February 2021
Union Week information (RAG events)
Task 2 - 'pair-building' exercises
(Week 5) Monday 22nd-Friday 26th February 2021
Feedback for scheme so far takes place and we can evaluate whether the weekly tasks/social/information is worth the effort.

I'd also like to include School President events, Careers events and socials in each weekly email so that pairs can go together. This will require the group we assemble to be quite plugged-in!

CURRENT STATISTICS (as of Thursday 12pm)

Art History	5	*Further advertisement*
Biology	16	*Sufficient for pairing*
Chemistry	2	*Further advertisement*
Classics	7	*Further advertisement*
Computer Science	14	*Sufficient for pairing*
Divinity	2	*Further advertisement*
Earth Sci	2	*Further advertisement*
Economics	9	*Further advertisement*
English	13	*Sufficient for pairing*
Film Studies	4	*Further advertisement*
Geography	14	*Sufficient for pairing*
Graduate School	1	*Further advertisement*
History	17	*Sufficient for pairing*
International Relations	14	*Sufficient for pairing*
Management	5	*Further advertisement*
Maths	10	*Sufficient for pairing*
Medicine	8	*Further advertisement*
Modern Languages	7	*Further advertisement*
Philosophy	11	*Sufficient for pairing*
Physics	15	*Sufficient for pairing*
Psychology	8	*Further advertisement*
Social Anthropology	1	*Further advertisement*
TOTAL	**188**	

Last scheme – 140 students