

University of St Andrews Students' Association

Education Committee

2 February 2015, 6pm, Students' Association Board Room

MINUTES

Present: Ondrej Hajda (Director of Representation), Darya Smirnova (SRC Education Officer), Charlotte Potter (Arts/Divinity Faculty President), Katy Rae (Science/Medicine Faculty President), Hannah Chinn (Art History), Louise Cameron (Biology), Alexey Sazonov (Computer Science), Alex Taylor (Divinity), Katy Relph (Earth & Environmental Sciences), Oliver Harrison (Economics & Finance), Hannah Smith (English), Marcin Kupiecki (Film Studies), George King (Geography & Sustainable Development), Jack Carr (History), Yeung Cheung (Management), Kelly Johnston (Mathematics & Statistics), Dawnn Khoo (Medicine), Eleanor Mullin (Philosophy), Louise McCaul (Physics & Astronomy), Danielle Polemeni-Hegarty (Social Anthropology), Roddy McGlynn (SRC Member for Equal Opportunities).

Apologies: Tania Strützel (Postgraduate Convenor), Rhiann Ferguson (Chemistry), Maxwell Fabiszewski (Classics), Ainikki Riikonen (International Relations), Janine Gallagher (Modern Languages), Mary Kempnich (Psychology & Neuroscience).

1 Reports from Education Committee

School Presidents reported on what they did in Semester 1. Most of them focused on organising career and social events within their Schools/Departments. Some School Presidents collaborated with societies for their specific subject.

2 Matters arising

a) UCU setting & marking boycott

Ondrej reported that the UCU members balloted to accept the proposed changes to the pension scheme and as a result, it seemed unlikely that the UCU would resume the setting & marking boycott in Semester 2.

b) Report from feedback focus groups (*Postponed till next meeting*)

c) JF Allen Library

School Presidents discussed potential ways of addressing the issue of JF Allen Library not being open on weekends or after 6pm on weekdays. It was agreed that Science, Medicine, and Management School Presidents would meet up to discuss the possibility of launching an online or on paper petition.

Action: Ondrej to organise a meeting for all Science, Medicine, and Management School Presidents to discuss the JFAL petition.

d) Anti-distraction campaign

Yeung reported that the team had asked the Design Team for help with producing graphic materials for the campaign but no one volunteered to take up the project yet. Ondrej suggested that they sent him draft designs he could ask the Students' Association Design & Marketing Officer for help. The campaign was aimed to start in Week 3 but might be postponed due to the delay with designs.

4 Gender Neutral Toilets

Roddy (SRC Equal Opportunities Officer) explained his initiative for introducing gender-neutral toilets in University buildings in St Andrews. Most School Presidents approved of the initiative but some of them reported issues with logistics. School Presidents were recommended to contact Equality Officer in their School if they had one.

5 Enhancement Themes "Student Transitions" (Paper A)

Ondrej introduced the Student Transitions Enhancement Theme to School Presidents. A discussion was held about priorities of School Presidents and how they related to student transition and a source of potential funding from the University.

School Presidents discussed priority areas that this Enhancement Theme should focus on and they were identified as: transition to University, transition from University (to further study and/or employment), transition to independent learner, transition from sub-Honours to Honours, transition from study abroad, transition after extenuating circumstances (e.g. a leave of absence), and transition from University to private accommodation.

Some School Presidents also volunteered to take part in working groups based around the above priority areas.

Action: Ondrej to pass on the list of volunteers to Ros Campbell, the institutional contact for Student Transitions.

6 Teaching Awards (Paper B)

School Presidents discussed the proposed timeframe, categories, and awarding process for the Students' Association Teaching Awards. It was agreed that the nominations for the Teaching Awards open together with nominations for the Proctor's Award in Week 8 and close in Week 10. The shortlisting panel would consist of the Director of Representation and the two Faculty Presidents. The awarding panel would consist of the Director of Representation, Director-elect of Representation, Postgraduate Convenor, and the Proctor. It was also agreed that a category for a supervision of a PGR thesis should be added.

Action: Ondrej to add a PGR supervision category to the Teaching Awards.

7 National Student Survey (NSS)

Ondrej informed School Presidents that the National Student Survey opened on Monday 2 February and would be open on thestudentsurvey.com till the end of April 2015. Ondrej asked School Presidents to encourage final year undergraduate students in their School/Department to fill in the NSS. Promotional materials such as posters, leaflets, and pens were also handed out.

Ondrej explained some of the methodology behind the NSS and how the scores were calculated and used by the University to improve the student experience. Ondrej pointed out that they would discuss the NSS with the Proctor and Deans at the next School Presidents' Forum on 23 February.

It was suggested that School Presidents worked with their Director of Teaching on creating a list of changes that resulted from the NSS and other student feedback over the past year. Such a list could be sent around to students to highlight the importance of student feedback.

Action: All School Presidents to contact their Director of teaching and create a list of changes that came about as a result of the National Student Survey and other student feedback and communicate it to students.

8 Raisin Monday

Dawnn raised an issue about the inconvenience of rescheduling Raisin Monday to earlier in Semester 1 as it had affected the mid-term exams in the School of Medicine. It was agreed to include a discussion on timing of Raisin Monday on the agenda of the next School Presidents' Forum.

Action: Ondrej to include Raisin Monday on the agenda of the next School Presidents' Forum.

9 Treatment of students with disabilities – postponed till the next meeting

10 Elections & School Presidents' Handover

Ondrej informed School Presidents that the Students' Association Elections had been scheduled for Weeks 5 and 6 of Semester 2 and reminded everyone that their term of office finishes on 30 June 2015 and should therefore engage with all School Presidents' responsibilities till the end of Semester 2 exam season when the official handover with a new School President should take place.

It had been previously agreed that following the Elections, the School President-elect should have a gradual handover with the current School Presidents and be invited to Student Staff Consultative Committees. The current School President should also arrange a meeting for the School President-elect to meet with the Director of Teaching.

Ondrej asked School Presidents to start writing their handover pack sooner rather than later. Darya suggested that Ondrej shared an example of a good handover pack with School Presidents for reference.

Ondrej explained that the role of School Presidents had been created with intention to produce future Association Presidents and Directors of Representation and encouraged everyone to run for one of the positions in the Students' Association Elections 2015. Charlotte and Katy encouraged non-graduating School Presidents to run for the role of Faculty Presidents.

Action: All School Presidents to start writing a handover pack for their successor to give the next group of School Presidents the best possible start in office.

11 Pre-advising

Ondrej informed the Education Committee that the University was in the process of shifting the deadline for pre-advising to after Semester 2 exams results are published in June. Ondrej explained that students should not be affected by this change because School should continue to hold pre-advising talks with students within similar timeframe as in previous years.

12 Class Rep Survey

Ondrej asked School Presidents to encourage Class Reps to fill in the Class Rep Survey (bit.ly/ClassRepSurvey) before it closes at noon on Friday 13 February.

13 AOCB

The next Education Committee would be on Monday 16 February at 6pm in the Students' Association Board Room.

The next School Presidents' Forum would be on Monday 23 February at 5.15pm in the Students' Association Board Room