**Spanish department Semester One report**

**Rohan Date**

This report details my projects from Semester 1 of the academic year 2020/21, as well as outlining my plans for the future. It’s been a difficult semester, but I have tried to make a positive difference to the department going forward.

In advance of the Semester, I attended the School Presidents’ Training, learning the basic responsibilities of the role, and gaining a huge amount from the plans and projects of other School Presidents and convenors.

**Freshers’ Week Events**

I participated in the School of Modern Languages Welcome Event, which went really well, with a record attendance. My part consisted of a short introduction to the department in tandem with the Head of Department, Dr Ted Bergmann, and then a question-and-answer session.

Another event that I had a part in organising was a Spanish pub quiz, that took place over two weeks at the start of term. This was done in collaboration with the Hispanic Society and included the attendance of several staff members.

**Language exchange**

One of the biggest new additions to the department in the Semester was a language exchange in conjunction with the University of Valladolid, in Spain. This was primarily organised by Mónica Torres Pérez and involved more than 100 students on both sides, over 4 sessions during the week, every week. The sessions were run over Teams, half in English, half in Spanish and usually in groups of 3-5. I ran one of the sessions and the feedback from the project was overwhelmingly positive. The scheme will continue into Semester 2, although in a slightly different form.

**Weekly Emails**

The Weekly emails have been something I have put a fair deal of time and effort into over the course of the Semester. I publicised events in the Spanish Department or the School of Modern Languages more broadly, I shared surveys and did my best to make sure that everyone knew where they could reach support if they needed it. I also tried to add a bit more fun to the emails by including a weekly staff profile. For this I sent out a google form to the staff and put together a little fact file with a photo that I shared on a weekly basis. The aim of the profiles was to give people a chance to get to know the members of the department better, learn what their areas of research or interest are, and also gain some book and film recommendations to practice their Spanish. Additionally, I included a weekly Spanish word, joke, tongue twister, or sometimes an article, to give people a further opportunity to practice their Spanish.

**Governance**

Class Rep Elections

This year I added a 2nd Year ex-beginners rep as a new position, to help ease the jump from beginners to advanced Spanish, that takes place between Semesters. I ran multiple meetings with the Class Reps across the Semester and corresponded with them separately on any important issues.

Student-Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC)

This meeting was organised in Week 7, just after the ILW. We got a record number of responses, having sent it round in multiple emails. Strict timings on the meeting agenda helped us get through the meeting efficiently, and the clarity of the main points that the class reps brought up allowed for productive discussions with the staff. Following the SSCC I transformed the minutes into a visual form, using Microsoft Sway, sending this out with the original minutes so that students had the opportunity to view both versions.

Visiting Days

The Head of Department enlisted my help to provide a student perspective for the online visiting days. I participated in several of these and recruited other students to help out on other occasions.

Language Convenor meetings

The President of the School of Modern Languages organised convenors meetings every other week to make sure we all acted together for important events and schemes. That allowed us to help publicise an event with the Head of Translation at the Foreign Office, as well as the study abroad buddy scheme that seems to have already proved very successful and will hopefully continue for years to come.

**Careers**

Aside from the talk from the Head of Translation the majority of the careers events in Modern Languages are taking place in Semester Two. We are running a series of events, that will help students build their skills and know where and how to apply for jobs that are suited to Language graduates. Within the Spanish Department I am running one specific event that will look at writing cover letters, CVs and taking interviews in a Spanish speaking environment, using two native speaker members of staff to lead the session. Subsequently we’ll have an alumni panel, talking about jobs they’ve gone into as language graduates.

**Looking forward: Semester 2**

The careers events will a big part of the new semester. As will my participation in a diversity study within the School. Other than that, I will largely be continuing many of the projects and plans I have already been doing from Semester One. Thanks for reading!