Education Committee Meeting

Date | Time 16th February, 2023 6:00 PM | Location UCO:32

Meeting called by	Education Executive Committee	Attendees: Quinn, Madeleine, Yasmin, Claire, Catherine, Rosa, Fran, Tom, Federica, Laurence, Noah, Toni, Robbie W, Robbie C, Zoe, Carol, Patricia, Ava, Sam Gorman, Syna, Kiera, Anne, Juan, Iona, Kiki, Anna
Type of meeting	Education Committee Meeting	
Facilitator	Faculty Presidents	
Note taker(s)	Toni	Optional: n/a
Timekeeper	Toni	Apologies: Emma, Maggie, Dan
		Absences: Kirsty, Grace, Taylor
		Please read:n/a
		Please bring: n/a

Agenda Item

Topic	Presenter	Time Allotted
Welcome	Martyna	5 minutes

Elections
- Chase's (Academic Representation Coordinator) video on elections is being shared.
- timeline
  o Nominations will be open from 22nd February – 7th March
  o 14th and 15th March: voting days
- To do points for School Presidents & Language Convenors during this period:
  o Talk to role successors
  o Think about running for re-election
  o Nudge students for all roles
  o Consider submitting a nomination
  o Block out 2-3 hours per week during nominations
  o Consider hosting a School President debate/town hall
  o Attend the elections launch (6th March evening)
  o Encourage students to vote: there will be a competition among Schools for the hightest % voter turnout
- Email templates and graphics will be shared with School Presidents & Language Convenors to circulate.
- Reminder of Pledge to Vote campaign: all are eligible. This will consists of ashort video containing a pledge to vote.
	Martyna, Chase	10 minutes

- Elections Toolkit is shared. Chase points to a guide on how to use it. - Reminder to keep an eye out on Instagram and Facebook pages during the election period. - Catherine (SP English) emphasises getting Class Reps involved in pushing voter turnout.		
Open letter supporting strikes - An open letter in support of strikes has been shared by the UCU. Students are encouraged to sign it. - Kiki (SP International Relations) emphasises the importance of communicating that students are supportive of strikes but not fine with them happening. Patricia (SP Earth & Environmental Sciences) suggests writing a separate letter from School Presidents. Catherine (SP English) and Claire (SP Music Centre) emphasise publicising the existing open letter. - Noah (Director of Education) adds that the open letter is going to SRC on Tuesday (21stFebruary) for approval and encourages School Presidents & Language Convenors to sign the letter. Noah explains that SPs can also write a separate open letter as long as it is in line with the motion that has already been passed. - Fran (FP Arts & Divinity) clarifies: if the letter goes to SRC, School Presidents & Language Convenors can sign in their roles which lends greater weight to the signature.	Patricia	10 minutes

Accessibility of set readings
- Kiki (SP International Relations) relates that some students shared accessibility issues in the School of International Relations concerning workload (3-8 mandatory readings per week). Neurodivergent students and students with visual disabilities are particularly affected by this. It has been suggested to offer audible versions. Kiki asks for experiences in other Schools.
- Tom (SP Classics) answers that students with learning and/or visual disabilities can be provided with text-to-speech tools through the Disability Office.
    o Kiki replies that often sources are scanned which does not work with text-to-spech tools. Zoe (SP Maths & Statistics) adds that PDFs can often not be read. In Maths the content has been converted into HTML Zoe offers to share experiences from the School of Maths & Statistics with Kiki.
    o Noah (Director of Education) adds that text-to-speech also does not pick up scientific vocabulary.
- Noah (Director of Education) adds that often neurodivergent students are in the process of getting diagnoses which in
	Kiki	10 minutes

many cases takes a long time. Noah asks Kiki to forward the feedback cited. - Kiki (SP International Relations) responds that this feedback has been sent to the School's EDI Committee and is happy to share it with Noah. Kiki adds that particularly Sub-honours students have flagged this which is even more concerning as classes in Sub-honours are larger which makes direct student more difficult. Kiki relates that email contact with the School has been slowed down due to strikes but will get back with answers on the survey next at EduCom. - Rosa (SP History) offers to collaborate with Kiki, as this has been an issue in the School of History as well. - Kiki (SP International Relations) is planning on running an accessibility survey. Noah (Director of Education) offers to help. - Federica (LC Comparative Literature) shares similar experiences in Comparative Literature. *Action Point (Toni)*: Accessibility of content will be added to the preliminary agenda for the semester's last Undergraduate Academic Forum. - Kiki (SP International Relations) adds that some student Reps have been looking at paid resources which will be considered. - Catherine (SP English) relates that this was brought up at the SSCC in English last semester. The issue was particularly in Honours modules. Catherine expresses support of the idea of a larger motion. Catherine will look into the minutes of what the Disability & Academic Support Rep suggested at last semester's SSCC.		
UAF debrief - Noah shares emails that Frank Müller (AVP Dean Learning and Teaching) sent out following up on points raised at the Undergraduate Academic Forum (9th February 2023). - Frank Müller reached out to the Director of Teaching for Modern Languages concerning class sizes and teaching practices. The Director of Teaching has not replied yet and not reached out to Language Convenors. - Frank Müller reached out to the two Associate Deans Students concerning advising who asked for specific names of advisors and cite the general student handbook for guidance which contains all student policies university-wide.	Martyna	20 minutes

	- Several School Presidents and Language Convenors raise that the student handbook is not advertised or widely known of. - No School President or Language Convenor has been contacted by the Associate Deans Students to follow up on this. - Laurence (SP Divinity) shares personal experience of being advised improperly. Other students have reached out about similar experiences. - Noah (Director of Education) shares that the Associate Deans Students will consult the Director of Education in the planning of future advising training. - Zoe (SP Maths & Statistics) shares that in the last semester students were advised into the wrong modules which led them to failing. Kiki (SP International Relations) emphasises that this is an issue across Schools which uniquely affects students on joint degrees. There is a common sense that students rather do research on advising than trust their advisors' advice. - Madeleine (LC German) suggests setting up an open submissions form to collect experiences so that this collection can be presented. - Catherine (SP English) suggests including this in the agenda for the Undergraduate Academic Forum on the 23rd March 2023 again and agrees with Madeleine's suggestion. Noah agrees with this approach. Rosa adds that names/schools should be added. Claire responds that Schools may be difficult to identify, as students may not be advised into those Schools. EduCom agrees on a set of questions to be included in the form. - Frank Müller reached out to the Director of Education for English regarding assessment response times but has not received a reply yet. Catherine (SP English) answers that the Director of Teaching for English has been on strike. - Frank Müller reached out the the Directors of Teaching in Maths & Statistics and Divinity regarding class sizes. Zoe (SP Maths & Statistics)		

expresses that the issue has been resolved. Laurence (SP Divinity) was not cc'd into potential further communication.

- o Frank Müller reached out to Student Services regarding persistent wellbeing issues and waiting lists for appointments. Frank specifically requested support for study abroad support. Student Services has not responded yet. Noah (Director of Education) will be meeting with the Global Office and invites Federica (LC Comparative Literature) to join.
- o Frank Müller reached out to the Director of Teaching for Psychology & Neuroscience concerning assessment response times. The Director of Teaching for Psychology & Neuroscience responded extensively and the issue was resolved.
- Frank Müller (AVP Dean Learning and Teaching) also asked Noah (Director of Education) for feedback on the idea that parents of students would be notified when they receive an academic alert.
    - o All School Presidents and Language Convenors present unanimously disagree with the idea.
    - o Noah (Director of Education) contextualises that this idea stems from a larger conversation in which Student Services wanted to involve parents more specifically for struggling students. Frank Müller's idea was raised in response to students being unresponsive when reached out to. Other conversations have circulated around designating a "safe contact" which is still being discussed. Kiki (SP International Relations) supports the idea of designating a "safe contact" but emphasises that it should be taken into account at what point this question is asked in order to allow independent decisions.
- All School Presidents and Language Convenors agree unanimously that the Undergraduate Academic Forum on the 9th February 2023 went generally better than the Undergraduate Academic Forum on the 1st December 2022.
    - o Robbie C (SP Medicine) expresses a sense that feedback brought up by members of EduCom was taken more seriously due to data that backed up arguments.
    - o Federica (LC Comparative Literature) expresses frustration at being dismissed despite efforts of getting feedback and suggesting solutions.

○ Noah (Director of Education) emphasises that the Undergraduate Academic Forum is the point where conversations start and that these conversations are longer processes. Noah suggests being clearer on the timeline of implementation of feedback.
  ○ Zoe (SP Maths & Statistics) raises that detailed follow-ups (module codes) were unnecessary in the meeting given the short time frame of one hour. Noah suggests compiling a meeting pack ahead.
  ○ Madeleine (LC German) raises that clearer information on what the roles of attending University staff entail and on their responsibilities would be appreciated for greater clarity.		

Other
  ○ Reminder to sign up to be part of the selection committee for the Teaching Awards. Reminder that this is also open to Class Reps.
  ○ Library closures: the library will be at least partially, potentially fully closed on the 25th and 26th February 2023.
  ○ Reminder to promote STEM ball on Social Media. *Action Point (Martyna)*: links and a blurb will be sent out to EduCom.
	Martyna	5 minutes

Observers: None

Resources: