

**Education Committee**

**Thursday 21st November, 5:30pm**

**Students’ Association Committee Room**

**Minutes**

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Apologies

Amy, Madeline, Katie

1. Matters Arising
   1. Presentation on the Volunteering Portal

Joint initiative with the AU for SPs to get recognition for extracurricular activities. Works in conjunction with the CAPOD PSCs. You can log any time spent working with union subcommittees and academic representation. If you would like to sign up, please contact Amy.

* 1. Representative from UCU

(6pm) Tom tej1@, President of UCU St Andrews:

UCU currently in dispute with employers across the entire UK: about pensions, and about pay. Why? Originally, the employers proposed drastic changes to the pension scheme. Outcome was to come up with a report about how pension scheme is organised. Since 2011, every 3 years UCU members have lost benefits and paid more, with a loss of about 250,000 pounds to UCU members over their careers.

All 3 unions enter negotiations with the headline of a basic increase in pay; it hasn’t increased in about a decade. Staff have lost about 17% of their pay. UCU want pay to at least match the inflation rate.

Issues:

casualisation, the issue whereby work has been done in the past on stable contracts, but more working universities are offering work by the hour, leads to people routinely working more than they are paid.

Gender and race pay gap: 20% gender pay gap across the university sector. Minorities also lose pay.

Workload: every year, asked to do something more. Job becomes more intense, regularly reporting 50+ hour weeks, where 48 hours is the guideline for the maximum. St Andrews’ definition of working week is 36 hours.

During the 8 days of strike action; 25th Nov-3rd Dec. Participants won’t do anything relevant to their work. Afterwards, ‘action short of strike’: People won’t reschedule teaching, won’t take voluntary duties, etc.

Info: ~700 UCU staff on campus, Higher Education Committee of UCU will decide what each phase of the action looks like, so past the initial strikes there’s no planned action other than ‘action short of strike’.

Question: How do strikes affect those it’s meant to affect? (eg not students)

The way to get senior management teams of universities concerned about this is the potential reputational damage that may come as a result of strikes. It’s not just focused on students, because even those without a teaching role are striking. Threatening disruption to the academic calendar, especially graduation, raises awareness to the senior management team.

Suggestion: Just strike during exams? Tom responded that the strikes need to be as effective as possible, as the point is to cause as much disruption as possible.

Question about unequal pay: submitted local claim about the gender pay gap, and local group working on improving aspects of this.

* 1. Semester One reports

Amy: At the end of Sem1, (deadline Friday 31 Jan, 5pm), everyone has to produce reports about everything they have done in the first semester. Examples of previous reports circulated are to be circulated. Need to submit this to get your position written on your transcript. This is a good opportunity to reflect on what you’ve achieved and what you hope to achieve next semester.

* 1. Consistency of credits (Rhiannon)

Rhiannon: Geo credits organised differently to SD: for students with joint degrees, they find it difficult to fulfill the correct amount of credits without over/undercrediting. Students also feel as though they put in equal amounts of effort into modules regardless of credit weight. Talks already underway to remove 10 credit modules, but it hasn’t been done. Choices are restricted due to this.

Seamus: Same issue with physics/computer science students.

Rhiannon: More geo students than SD, cannot change 15 credit modules due to SD being ‘mainstream’. Universal number of credits per module?

Morganne: 10-20-15 credit increments in 2-3-4th year. Maybe change 15 credit modules to either 10 or 20? Or maybe universal ‘increments’ of 10 credits (eg 10,20,30...)

Amy: Will bring this issue up at the next SP Forum.

* 1. TEL feedback

New layout of MySaint for new students, with access to pretty much everything you need (eg courses, marks, Microsoft office, etc). It will be more mobile friendly too. Feedback?

Everyone likes the new format. Questions were raised as to whether this was mobile or tablet friendly. Amy has checked with the TEL team and the new design is compatible with mobile and tablet.

* 1. Academic Alerts

This will be discussed next week instead.

* 1. Update from Careers Meeting (Joe)

Met with Director of Careers Centre, and Assistant Director for Career Management. Focused on greater tailoring to schools (the 15-45 min meeting) should be more school specific. 15 months after graduation, students get a questionnaire about what you do after university. The job you select is allocated a code. There are 29000 codes which career centre monitors.

Also talked about having a routinised calendar of events in coordination with previous SP and Career Centre to ensure a smaller burden on SP to think of new things, and less ad hoc structured events from Careers Centre.

Advertising and improving awareness: website will be sorted summer 2020. CC would be happy to adapt their website based on SP suggestions. One group: 4 SP would focus on relationship between CC and SPs .

Another group: Student advisory board, giving more direct feedback to the CC, open to students.

Smaller group meeting in the first week of Sem2, in the meantime, Joe can work out a rough plan for the calendar.

CC want to integrate into individual schools, and Joe/Morganne encouraged them to be more proactive. They now have more knowledge about what School Presidents do.

Lot: the new Students Advisory Board; goal is to formalise and clarify a relationship between CC and Schools, understanding what they can provide for us, and us them.

* 1. William and Mary (Joe)

Some students who come to St Andrews for their 3rd year on the W&M programme end up taking 4th year modules; they don’t often learn the same ‘academic’ subjects, topics etc as they would in St Andrews. It’s an issue in Economics too.

With Direct Entry, there are smaller modules available in some schools to catch people up with knowledge they might not have. Maybe the same thing could work for W&M students?

Amy: Will bring up this matter at SP Forum.

* 1. Strikes helpdesk

Push info about the helpdesk. The SU remains neutral, but still ok to promote helpdesk.

* 1. Postgraduate feedback – Arts (Sophia)

Feedback from IR tutors: climate in IR for postgrads has improved, become more community based.

Philosophy has some big issues right now to do with the department (funding, support, climate).

1. AOCB
   1. Christmas lunch

2nd December 12pm. Sign up!

* 1. SP clothing

Deadline to confirm orders is 27th, pay at cash office

* 1. Date of next meeting: 28th November

**Reports from School Presidents**

**Art History**

-sent weekly email

-Hosted Postgraduate Application Workshop

-Sent in School Presidents Report ahead of Art History School Council

-Gathered names of students interested in Fife Collections partnership

**Biology – no report submitted.**

**Chemistry**

Done this week:  
Review of SSCC minutes   
Circulation of minutes   
Follow up meeting arrangements   
Discussion about improving teaching lab health and safety  
Discussion about therapy dogs for chemistry   
Discussion about academic alerts   
Discussion about study abroad   
Education committee   
Meeting with Director of Teaching   
Submission of agenda items to the Director of Teaching for teaching committee   
Circulation of class rep reports to their respective classes   
Planning tea/coffee/cake well-being session   
Arranged wellbeing posters   
Bought coffee cups, tea, coffee and biscuits for Wellbeing event   
School president forum

**Classics – no report submitted.**

**Computer Science – no report submitted.**

**Divinity – no report submitted.**

**Economics and Finance – no report submitted.**

**English**

Here’s what I’ve been up to:

* Sent out Weekly Email
* Met with Class Reps to discuss any issues that may have cropped up, and to address the upcoming strikes and how we plan to help students cope with them
* Met with DoT to confirm changes to exam rubrics and assessment procedure in response to the impact of the strikes, particularly for sub-honours modules, and to catch-up on school wellbeing progress
* Agreed to organise and run extra study sessions and discussion groups for first and second year modules to help students who feel especially impacted by the strikes
* Met with Film Studies president to make a to-do list and a start on organizing the Creative Industries Alumni event next semester
* Attended AMG Dialogue meeting
* Sent out weekly surveys to sub-honours modules
* Analysed data from previous week’s surveys
* Attended School President’s Forum

**Earth and Environmental Sciences – no report submitted.**

**Film Studies – no report submitted.**

**Geography and Sustainable Development – no report submitted.**

**History**

Last week I had the Pre-SSCC with my Class Reps, and it seems like we are all ready to go! This will be the first Honours/PG SSCC of the semester (as it was accidentally scheduled for Week 11), and the second Sub-Honours of the semester.

I also planned the date for my alumni event – February 6th!

Joel (Classics) and I are still trying to plan Ides Ball, but since we have no funds that exist in our own Schools, we are struggling to plan it! Any help would be greatly appreciated.

**International Relations – no report submitted.**

**Graduate School**

General Concerns & Questions:

- Concerns have been raised and remain unresolved regarding the Sports Centre as venue for the graduation instead of Younger Hall. Proposals for solutions include using other venues like Upper/Lower College or Parliament Hall. à a Graduate School reception is likely to take place after the official graduation

- Attended the Student – Museum Advisory Panel

- Students from the Grad School formed a committee for organising Grad School clothing (most likely jumpers or hoodies)

Class Reps:

- Christmas Dinner with the Grad School staff and students is to be organised (date set for the 5th of December at the Byre Theatre)

- For the Career Centre meeting: asked the Employability Rep to set up a survey to gather feedback and input for the session

SSCC:

- Minutes have been circulated.

- A solution to the problem in one of the Statistic Modules is to be found à the course seems to be oversubscribed leading to a lack of contact hours

**Management – no report submitted.**

**Medicine**

Monday:

- Sent in weekly report

- Attended AAM (1h)

- Met with MD2000 & MD3000 reps (1h)

Tuesday:

- Met w/ Veronica and Library staff to discuss resources and a focus gp (1h). Action: Advertise spaces in e-mail. Action: Help organise & advertise FG for ScotGEM pre-Xmas and BSc in the new year.

- Met w/ MD2101 & MD4000 reps (1.5h)

Wednesday:

- Met with Alun & Veronica (1h)

- Met with Clive (15min)

- Sent out UG SSCC Agenda (30min)

Thursday:

- Prepped my study skills lecture for MD2000 & MD3000 (1h).

Friday:

- Attended lunch time talk organised with my MD4000 reps (1h)

Weekend:

- Sent out weekly e-mail (20min)

**Modern Languages – no report submitted.**

**Arabic and Persian Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Comparative Literature Convenor – no report submitted.**

**French Convenor – no report submitted.**

**German Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Italian Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Russian Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Spanish Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Music – no report submitted.**

**Philosophy – no report submitted.**

**Physics – no report submitted.**

**Psychology & Neuroscience – no report submitted.**

**Social Anthropology**

04/11 - CMR email recipients gathered from Societies list on union website, and email sent out. Checked in with AnthroSoc. 1st and 4th year reps chased up about their feedback forms.

05/11 - weekly email sent out; 1st, 2nd, 3rd year feedback forms sent. Email to 3rd and 4th year with 3000 and 4000 module options feedback forms sent out.

06/11 - TLA 12-13

07/11 - Facebook post within rep group to find out meeting time for pre-SSCC, & distinctiveness question. EduComm 17:30-18:50

08/11 - pre-SSCC meetings with DoT booked in (sub-hons 14:00 & hons 15:00 11/11).

09/11 - Room for Cake and Tea event booked (15/11 - 11-13:00)!

11/11 - Week 9 email drafted. Event made for Cake and Tea. Sub-honours and honours pre-SSCC meetings (14:00 & 15:00). Ingredients for Friday Cake and Tea event bought. SSCC Agenda drafted

12/11 - week 9 email sent

13/11 - Finalised agenda sent to staff, copies printed in advance of SSCC. SSCC held 14:00-15:00 Arts Lecture Theatre Seminar Room 3. Emailed wellbeing within school to discuss posters. Chased up postgrad rep about a date for the PG SSCC & evening degree coordinator and rep to discuss their feedback.

14/11 - 3 hours baking for Cake and Tea. Any remaining ingredients bought. Minutes sent to TLA for approval. Email invite for event sent.

15/11 - posted in FB groups with event. 10:30-12:45 cake and tea event. Receipts for Orientation Brunch and Cake and Tea events given to departmental admins. Meeting with Siobhan (2nd year rep) 13:00-14:15

17/11 - Week 10 email drafted.

**Reports from Faculty Presidents**

**Arts and Divinity Faculty President**

**What have I done since my last report?**

I attended and took the minutes for EduComm. In this meeting, we discussed the Museum’s new student-oriented plans, setting up a meeting with the Head of the Careers Dept and some School Presidents, wellbeing, student representation on particular School-related committees, strikes, outreach programs, and the workload for School Presidents. Importantly, we also consolidated what we would like to talk about at our second School Presidents’ Forum of the semester (Monday the 18th of November).

Outwith attending EduComm, I attended the aforementioned School Presidents’ Forum. Akin to EduComm, topics included strikes and student representation (e.g. the School President of Biology – amongst others - does not sit on her School’s Teaching Committee), the Vertically Integrated Projects discussed at our last School Presidents’ Forum, and the restructuring of the Academic Calendar. I took the Minutes for this Forum.

I also attended our final Joint Councils for the semester (Nov 19th). Topics included voting for the elections committee, strike actions, the Hong Kong police violence, and many more.

Moreover, Amy, Dennis, and I are in the process of organising a meeting to discuss the Faculty-wide Magazines I reported on last time, as we would really love to develop this project (alongside School Presidents and other students; their feedback is the key).

On Friday the 15th of November, I organised an EduComm Potluck for the School Presidents, which gave the School Presidents a great chance to socialise outside of EduComm. Unfortunately, I could not attend, but I received positive feedback about this event from the attendees.

Further, I have been in contact with the Commuter Students Rep (Lifers Sub-Committee) regarding the fact that some Schools are asking students to use technology and software which cannot easily/cannot at all be used on home computers. In response to this issue, I asked Amy to put the topic on the Agenda for the School Presidents’ Forum, which allowed me to talk to the Deans/Proctor about this. The Proctor is now looking into software and technology accessibility for commuter students (perhaps the status can give them home-access), particularly those studying Mathematics and Geography.

I have also set a meeting date for early next semester with the head of the Minorities and Philosophy Chapter (MAP) and the head of the Afro-Caribbean Society, as we would like to hold a panel discussion event or the like next semester. However, in order to do so, we must first talk about our ideas and schedules. Moreover, the head of MAP and I will meet separately next semester to finalise our arrangements for the E&D panel discussion we will be hosting next semester (either in May 2020 or beforehand). I am really looking forward to these projects!

Lastly, and importantly, I met with Prof Woodfield (the University’s Vice President for Equality & Diversity) to discuss the University’s E&D goals, the upcoming Race Equality Charter, and the People’s Strategy (particularly the gender pay gap). As I am currently editing a document containing the key points and goals we discussed, I will report more on this at the next meeting. For now, I am happy to report that Dennis and I are now part of the Race Equality Charter working group, alongside some other students and staff. In addition, Prof Woodfield and I will continue our discussions about the prevailing gender pay gap, as this is something myself and numerous students care deeply about. The aforementioned working group’s first meeting will be in December. I will also forward philosophy’s seminar guidelines to Prof Woodfield, as we aspire to get all Schools to have similar guidelines (if they so desire).

Other than all of the above, I’ve just been promoting School Presidents’ and Joint Councils’ members’ events on social media, as well as answering some emails and questions from School Presidents. As usual, I also hosted my office hour in Rector’s on Thursday (4-5pm). Today’s and my upcoming office hours will be primarily used to talk to students interested in running for my current position next academic year.

**What progress has been made on my manifesto?**

All of the tasks I have been working on so far are in line with my key manifesto points of representing students’ voices to the best of my ability, supporting Amy and the School Presidents, collaborating with Dennis on pertinent issues, and organising new projects (such as the Faculty Magazines).

Some of the initiatives I have been working on also extend beyond my manifesto’s remit, which is great, as I largely respond to the voices of the School Presidents and wider student body.

**What do I hope to achieve by next report?**

Amy and I will have a working meeting on Friday, the 22nd of November, to touch base about all the things we have done so far this semester and what we would like to achieve next semester. Furthermore, I aim to help Amy organise an EduComm Christmas Dinner, since the School Presidents seem quite keen to have one. It’s incredibly lovely to be working with such a motivated, enthusiastic, and supportive team of leaders!

I hope to meet with Dennis to discuss the ID modules’ SSCCs and rep reports, as well as some other pertinent issues that have arisen this semester (e.g. windfarms campaign and students’ involvement in this, wellbeing reps in the Schools, technology and software accessibility for all students, and the Faculty Magazines).

I will also be attending the final Academic Councils of this semester in early December, alongside Dennis. We will also attend the Race Equality Charter’s working group’s first meeting in December, which I am very much looking forward to.

Additionally, Ed Winters (a vegan activist) will hopefully come to St Andrews next semester. Originally, Effective Altruism, the Philosophy Society, and I had set up a working group with Ed’s publicist to create a lecture series (alongside a few other events) for Ed. This was meant to take place in September 2019, but Ed unfortunately had to reschedule. Thus, I hope discussions and plans will soon resume, so we can get Ed to come to StA and participate in some events next semester.

With reference to the aforementioned Joint Councils meeting, I voted in favour for adopting the motion in support of Hong Kong students studying in St Andrews and condemning the ongoing police violence in Hong Kong. Needless to say, this issue is of fundamental importance both when considering the safety of students from Hong Kong currently in St Andrews and for me personally.

I am sure some tasks here and there will pop up, so I hope to remain flexible and achieve any short-term goals which come my way in response to such tasks. Moreover, I hope to have kept working on the initiatives outlined in the first section of this report.

**Why does what I’m doing matter to students, and how can they get involved?**

A lot of what Amy, Dennis, and I do is focused on education and University policy, which directly impacts the students. As always, anyone who has an interest in any of the above initiatives and events I have mentioned is welcome to contact me at artdivfp@st-andrews.ac.uk.

**Science and Medicine Faculty President – no report submitted.**