

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 12th October 2005

Present Dean of Students (Mr B Misstear), Senior Tutor (Dr C Laudet), Dr M Coffey, Mr S Gannon, Ms S O'Brien, Dr A Piesse, Mr R Sheridan.

Apologies College Secretary (Mr M Gleeson), Senior Lecturer (Prof C Kearney), Deputy Treasurer (Mr I Mathews), Ms M Leahy.

In attendance Ms G Conroy

The Dean of Students welcomed members attending their first meeting of the Committee.

SECTION A

SS/05-06/1 Minutes The minutes of the meetings held on 30th June, and 5th July 2005 were approved and signed.

SS/05-06/2 Matters Arising from the Minutes Matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and are recorded below (see minutes **SS/05-06/3**, **SS/05-06/4**, **SS/05-06/5**, **SS/05-06/6**, **SS/05-06/7**, **SS/05-06/8**, **SS/05-06/9**, **SS/05-06/10**.)

SS/05-06/3 College Health Service A presentation of the draft review report to Executive Officers is scheduled within the next two weeks prior to discussion by the Student Services Committee.

SS/05-06/4 Student Diary The diary had been produced and distributed at registration to all students. It had also been produced in sufficient numbers for staff. The new layout and size had proved popular. With a very successful fundraising campaign, the cost to College is likely to be very small and probably less than €1,000.

SS/05-06/5 Student Counselling Services Annual Report The provision for 2005-06 under the HEA Strategic Initiatives for learning support activities had been reduced from €190,000 to €113,000 with €20,000 set aside for student tracking. This level of reduction caused significant difficulties for the Student Counselling Service and the other departments involved, and would be raised in the context of the Quality Review of the Service.

SS/05-06/6 Department of Sport Annual Report Ms Bennett had offered to give an audio-visual presentation of the new sports hall and facilities, and this would occur at the next Student Services Committee meeting.

SS/05-06/7 Sport and Recreation Facilities at Trinity Hall The Dean of Students reported that the issue of upgrading sports facilities at Trinity Hall had been raised at Site and Facilities on 11th October. The acting Director of Buildings Mr Paul Mangan had been very supportive, but it had been noted that funds would only be available for basic maintenance rather than a capital intensive upgrade of the facilities. A meeting of all interested parties, including the Directors of Sport, Accommodation and Buildings as well as student representatives, should be held to see what could be achieved if resources were pooled.

SS/05-06/8 Student Disability Service Annual Report In the context of the SDS Annual Report, there was a discussion on the difficulties facing the service when there was only one permanent member of staff. There was also discussion of physical access issues for students with mobility impairment, for example, when a student with a disability was required to do a clinical placement in buildings not governed by the College. This led to discussion on the practice of recruiting students when the resources needed to provide for their special needs were not in place. Professional registration, a separate issue, was not an option for some students. The College Open Day is an opportunity to inform guidance counsellors on such matters. English language proficiency amongst international students continued to be problematic. The Student Services Committee along with the Registrar had an important role to play in advising Schools and Vice Deaneries on the responsible recruitment of international students.

It was agreed that summaries of the Student Counselling and Student Disability Service reports would be circulated to the Board.

SS/05-06/9 College Day Nursery The short-term options arising from the assessment by Bernardos were (1) a Portakabin in the adjacent car park, which would provide an additional 15 places; (2) a link with an adjacent crèche. Discussions are taking place with an adjacent facility. The Vice-Provost is continuing to examine in detail the requirement to double childcare provision, aware of the urgency to address the College Day Nursery needs.

Ms O'Brien informed the committee that a student who had approached the College Day Nursery had been told she could not be permitted to breastfeed her infant in its breastfeeding room, as her infant was not registered in the Day Nursery. She subsequently received *ad hoc* 'accommodation' in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, D'Olier Street. Ms O'Brien said she would seek clarification on breastfeeding facilities in College from the Secretary's Office.

SS/05-06/10 Student Charge The Deputy Treasurer would, in December, provide the SSC with a breakdown of the distribution of the Student Charge for the 2005-06 Estimates.

SS/05-06/11 Working Party on Strategy for Student Services A small working party had been meeting to address the resource issue, and its deliberations would soon be available. A meeting with the heads of services to discuss the finalised draft strategy would be held very shortly. The outcomes of the four services that had been reviewed would also be taken into account in finalising the strategy document. It was anticipated that some actions would be funded from existing resources, whereas others would require additional funding, possibly generated from a redistribution of the student charge income. The draft document would then be presented to Executive Officers prior to discussion at the SSC and the Board. The Committee agreed that it was timely to bring forward such a plan given that strategic plans were also in the course of preparation by Schools and Vice Deaneries.

SS/05-06/12 Change Fund allocation to Student Services Applications to the Change Fund had been sought by the end of May, to which the GSU had submitted a request for €45,000 to support a second sabbatical officer (€15,000 p.a. for three years). An allocation of €50,000 to Student Services had been made, for distribution by the Student Services Committee. The Dean of Students reported that following discussions with the Heads of the Services and with the GSU, it had been agreed that €20,000 should be allocated to the GSU with €30,000 to Services to provide IT support. The Committee approved this apportionment. It was also agreed that the Dean would write to the College Secretary to check whether funds allocated to cover

any shortfall in income for the student diary could be diverted for spending on IT support.

SS/05-06/13 **Quality Review of Services** The Student Disability Service, Careers Advisory Service, and Student Counselling Service had been reviewed externally. The final reports of the reviews of the SDS and CAS had been received, and comments by the Services on the external reviewers' reports were pending. In the case of each Service a summary report would be produced by the Quality Office, for presentation to the SSC by the College Secretary on behalf of the Provost. The Provost would then present it to the Board for discussion.

SS/05-06/14 **Updating the student death protocol** Recently, outside of term, there had been three tragic student deaths which highlighted the need for procedures for communicating news of a death to fellow students and the wider College community. A template had been devised by the Senior Tutor in consultation with colleagues in the Chaplaincy and Student Counselling Service, in which contact details of support services within College were included. Once the standard protocol had been observed, it would then be the intention to notify the wider College community of all students and staff. It was agreed that the Senior Tutor's Office would send such a message in the event of the death of an undergraduate student, while the Dean of Graduate Studies should perform the task in the case of postgraduate students. This additional protocol should be circulated to tutors, deans, heads of schools, etc. The SSC approved the suggested templates, one to be used in the initial communication to fellow students within the course of study and one to send to the College community. These templates would be made available to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Section B

SS/05-06/16 **Recommendation from Financial Assistance Committee**

The committee noted and approved the criteria bands for financial assistance 2005-06.

Section C

SS/05-06/17 **Schedule of future meetings**

The committee noted the Schedule of Board and Council meetings for 2005-06. The following dates were agreed in respect of SSC meetings during Michaelmas and Hilary terms:

- Thursday 17th November at 4.00 p.m.
- Tuesday 13th December at 2.30 p.m.
- Thursday 19th January at 4.00 p.m.

The venue for these meetings will be the Senior Tutor's Office.

Signed:

Date:

