

The University of Dublin
Trinity College
Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 24th January 2012

Present Professor Robbie Gilligan (Chair), Mr. Sean Gannon (Secretary), Professor Amanda Piesse (Dean of Students), Professor Veronica Campbell (Dean of Graduate Studies), Professor Patrick Geoghegan (Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies), Ms. Louisa Miller (SU Welfare Officer), Professor Claire Laudet (Senior Tutor), Mr. Martin Mc Andrew (Vice President GSU), Ms. Anne Fitzgerald (College Secretary), Mrs. Michelle Tanner (Head of Sport and Recreation), Professor Sarah Smyth (School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies), Ms. Janet Byrne (Treasurer's representative), Professor Mary McCarron (Dean of Health Sciences).

Apologies Professor Howard Smith (Head of Psychology).

In Attendance Ms. Susan Byrne.

Professor Jane Ohlmeyer (Vice Provost for Global Relations), Ms. Darina Kneafsey (Chief Operating Officer) and Mr. Brian Rooney (Project Manager, Global Relations) for SS/11-12/16.

Section A

SS/11-12/13 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2011 were approved and signed.

SS/11-12/14 Matters Arising from the Minutes. Matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and are recorded below (see minutes SS/11-12/15 below).

SS/11-12/15 Non-EU Funding

It was clarified that of the 25% (€173k) of the additional non- EU fee income to College in 2011/12 allocated to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) in the financial year 2011/12, €43k, has been assigned to the non-COO/non-faculty areas such as the capitated bodies and the Tutorial and Postgraduate Advisory Service. These monies will be allocated by the VP/CAO.

SS/11-12/16 Services to Students and the implementation of the non-EU Incentivisation model

The Vice Provost for Global Relations, the Project Manager for Global Relations and the Chief Operating Officer attended the meeting to discuss the Global Relations strategy. Under the non -EU incentivisation scheme, the COO has €173,000 in 2011/12 to be allocated to areas under her remit. The total allocated to the COO is based on 25% of the additional non- EU fee income to College in 2011/12 over the 3-year average base line. The formula to allocate this funding to the various areas has not been finalised.

The Vice-Provost for Global Relations confirmed that the aim of the proposed Global Relations Strategy is to double the number of international students in College by 2015 and to put Trinity on the world stage. The strategy will focus on relationship building, alumni development, fundraising and philanthropy. This will be enabled by reputation building and management, the appointment of a Global Officer in each School and positioning Trinity as the 'Irish University on the world stage'. High-quality education is at the forefront of the agenda as are pastoral support and student well-being. Having met 22 out of 24 Schools, the Vice- Provost for Global Relations reported that there is very positive support for the new strategy.

In the ensuing discussion, issues such as the support needs of non-EU students, the need for English language tuition, appreciation for different models of learning and of knowledge, health insurance, and the need for diversity training for all staff were raised as was the need to integrate students into the College community as comprehensively as possible.

It was stressed that international students often have high expectations of student services and considering they are some of the best ambassadors for the University, maintaining a good reputation for such services is vital as is maintaining the high quality of the educational experience.

A business plan will be produced and circulated by mid-March and this will include the resources required to provide the appropriate level of support.

The Dean of Students asked whether the governance model for global relations, when it emerged, would include representation for student wellbeing. She was assured that this would be the case.

Professor Gilligan thanked the Vice -Provost for Global Relations and the Chief Operating Officer for attending and said that he hoped that the quality of the international student experience would be a continuing conversation with the Committee.

SS/11-12/17 Review of Student Learning Services

Two reviewers visited the College in September 2011 to review the Student Learning Services in College, both those provided centrally and within Schools. Their report was finalised in November 2011.

The Student Services Committee expressed its strong support for the implementation of the following recommendations, brought for approval by the Dean of Students:

1. That the continued provision and resourcing of expert-led student learning services is an integral part of the student experience in College
2. That the coordination of a unified site, both virtual and physical, for the promotion, development and provision of those services is the most pragmatic next step in maintaining and developing student learning services
3. That a co-ordinator, reporting in to the Director of the Student Counselling Service, where the central Student Learning and Development function currently sits, is the most appropriate way to manage this
4. That the COO reviews the resource implications for the implementation of the steps outlined in 1-3.
5. Continue and develop the three in-School groups (PAL, Maths Help-room and Programming Support Centre) and seek support of the VP-CAO to secure funding.

The following points were raised during the discussion: funding is required for work already being done; supports are necessary for incoming postgraduate students, particularly international students, to facilitate their transition and adjustment to postgraduate studies.

As the Planning Group will be setting budgets for 2012-13 and the following four years by the end of March, a submission from Student Services regarding Student Learning Supports should be made before then.

SS/11-12/18 College Child Protection Policy

The draft 'Child Protection Policy' was presented and discussed.

The College is legally required to have a Child Protection Officer and consideration is currently being given to the profile and training required for this role as well as what the likely workload will be. Some rewriting of the policy was suggested to clarify under what circumstances parents should be consulted and whether racist behaviour towards children constituted abuse. Cross-referencing this policy with other College policies such as that on social networking was also suggested.

Since it is not possible to draft for all eventualities, the need for an annual review of this policy by the Student Services Committee was stated and this needs to be clearly articulated in the draft policy. The Child Protection Officer will be required to keep abreast of legal changes and to inform College of these changes through the Student Services Committee. The Dean of Students and the College Secretary will liaise and circulate the amended document to all Committee members before it is brought to Board.

SS/11-12/19 Working Group on the College Day Nursery

The Day Nursery Manager has resigned and the recruitment process for her successor is in train. There will be an update on the working group on the College Day Nursery at the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

SS/11-12/20 The Student Experience

The Dean of Students tabled a paper articulating the principles underpinning the student experience and she outlined the new projects undertaken in September;

- 1) Facilitating the transition from second to third level,
- 2) Recognition of exceptional extra-curricular achievement,
- 3) Dean's/ Provost's award
- 4) The renewal of Trinity Week.

There was a discussion regarding how extra-curricular achievements should be recognised. The "diploma supplement" might be an option. Concerns were expressed that recognition might lead to students getting involved just so that they could receive a reward. The Dean of Students clarified that such a supplement would merely be an acknowledgement of good work. This topic should be revisited at the next meeting to give Committee members time to give further thought to some of the issues raised.

There were some concerns that the document did not include existing projects in College such as the Dean of Students' Roll of Honour. The Dean pointed out that the document concerned new projects rather than existing ones, but that the Dean's /Provost's award might be seen as a development of the Roll of Honour idea. In relation to another section of the document, it was remarked that, at this stage, small group teaching is an aspiration rather than a College-wide reality.

In the lively discussion it was suggested that the University should be encouraging reflection on what it is to be a good citizen and recognising the quality and diversity of student achievement. Also there was a concern not to engender a calculating approach to awards.

Drawing the discussion to a conclusion, Professor Gilligan invited members of the Committee to give additional consideration to the Dean's paper and perhaps forward comments to her. There would be an opportunity for further discussion at the April meeting of the Committee with the intention of bringing a final document to Board and to Council.

SS/11-12/21 Financial Assistance Calendar Changes

The Senior Tutor explained that the Calendar entries regarding fee remission and financial assistance had not been updated for many years and no longer reflected the current funding mechanisms in

College. Without additional resources, the Financial Assistance Committee is not in a position to grant fee remission without seriously affecting the maintenance awards. In addition, the way the various benefactions and financial assistance awards are currently presented is unclear and this creates confusion and inappropriate expectations for students.

The wording 'needy students' was queried and it was suggested that the introduction to the Calendar entry should indicate that the "wording reflects the terms of benefactions as they were approved by Board when originally made".

SS/11-12/22 Dates for Future Meetings

A special meeting of the Committee will take place on Thursday 2nd February to discuss the annual reports from the various student Services. The next ordinary meeting will take place on Thursday 26th April 2012 (9.30 – 11.00 a.m.).

SS/11-12/23 Any Other Urgent Business

- **Responding to student death:** The Dean of Students convened a small group (the Senior Tutor, David McGrath, Niamh Farrelly, Deirdre Flynn, Peter Sexton, Louisa Miller, Martin McAndrew and the Dean of Students) to discuss whether College needed to be more proactive in recognising and intervening with distressed students following three student suicides just before Christmas. As a result, the Dean had drafted a memo for discussion with the Vice Provost and College Secretary including proposed actions in relation to staff training.
- **Student Registration Charge Consultative Group:** This group (the Chair and Secretary of the Student Services Committee, the Dean of Students, Students' Union representatives, staff from the Treasurer's Office) met to review income and expenditure in relation to the Student Registration Charge for 2011 and to consider the recently issued report from the Working Group convened by the HEA on Student Contribution and a Revised Framework of Good Practice. Among the actions agreed, the Consultative Group felt that it should become a formal sub-committee of Student Services and that the Student Services Committee terms of reference should be amended to reflect this.
- **IUSSN delegation on alcohol policy:** Trinity College hosted the IUSSN group for a meeting in relation to alcohol abuse within the third level sector with Ms. Roisin Shortall, the Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for primary care. In light of those discussions, which prompted scrutiny of College's alcohol policy, the Dean of Students proposes bringing a revised policy to the Committee later in the year.

SECTION B

No items in this section were discussed

SECTION C

SS/11-12/24 Minutes of the Capitation Committee meetings of 17th and 24th November and 1st December were noted and approved.

Signed:.....

Date:.....