

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Draft Minutes of the Student Life Committee

16th October, 2013

Present: Prof. Amanda Piesse (Dean of Students (Chair)), Ms Janet Byrne (Financial Services Division), Ms Leona Coady (Head of Academic Registry), Mr Graham Daniels (Director of Accommodation and Catering), Ms Alison Doyle (Learning Support Tutor, Disability Service), Dr Erika Doyle (Global Officer Co-ordinator), Ms Deirdre Flynn (Director, Student Counselling Service), Mr Seán Gannon (Director, Careers Advisory Service), Mr Stephen Garry (SU Welfare Officer), Mr Ryan Kenny (GSU President), Ms Jessie Kurtz (Acting Librarian), Dr Claire Laudet (Senior Tutor), Dr David McGrath (Director, College Health Service), Mr Donal McKeating (Chair, CSC), Ms Sarah Smith (GSU Vice President), Mr Brendan Tangney (Warden, Trinity Hall), Mrs Michelle Tanner (Head of Sports and Recreation), Mr Conor Traynor (Vice Chair DUCAC).

Apologies: Ms Aoife Cox (Manager, Day Nursery & Crèche), Mr PJ Moloney (Chair, Publications Committee), Mr John Murphy (Director, Information Systems Services), Fr Peter Sexton (Convenor, Chaplaincy), Dr Emma Stokes (Registrar of Chambers)

Present: Ms Simone Cameron-Coen (Minutes), Mr Bernard Mallee (Director of Communications and Marketing) and Ms Beibhinn Coman (Marketing Manager) for item SLC/13-13/11.

Section A

SLC/13-14/06 Minutes

There were two amendments to the minutes of the meeting of 18th September, 2013. A typing error in SLC/13-14/02 a. was corrected to read “Ms Gallagher asked if the work would inform the strategic plan 2014-2019.” Ms Coady brought a correction to the minutes SLC/13-14/02 b. to read, “Some students were directed to the library to print paperwork for registration. Some students were directed off-campus to print, which did not give a good impression, especially to international students unfamiliar with the language and the city.” The corrections were noted and the minutes were approved.

SLC/13-14/07 Matters Arising

Matters arising from the minutes of 18th September, 2013 were discussed and are recorded below as items (SLC/13-14/08/09/10).

(SLC/13-14/08) Year’s Work – Residential Accommodation

The Head of Academic Registry, the Warden of Trinity Hall, and the Director of Accommodation & Catering met with the Dean of Students.

(SLC/13-14/09) START

The Heads of Services have met with the START team individually and will be meeting as a group ahead of the December deadline.

(SLC/13-14/10) Terms of Reference

The President of the GSU commented that though communication was highlighted as a key component of the present committee its functions more importantly include initiating discussion, advising and making recommendations to Council on matters of policy and practice relating to student life and student wellbeing, thus having a meaningful impact as a principal committee of University Council.

SLC/13-14/11 Branding

Mr Bernard Mallee, Director of Communications and Marketing, and Ms Beibhinn Coman, Marketing Manager were welcomed to the committee. They presented on the College branding project, referring to its inclusion in the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan and highlighting the importance of a clear and distinctive brand in the higher education field given the current economic climate. They demonstrated the broad diversity of brands currently in use throughout College. The project will engage with two partners, one based in the UK, the other Irish, and also survey College staff. Robust data will be gathered through the research partner to enable College to understand internal and external attitudes to branding proposals. The plan will be ready to launch in line with the new Strategic Plan in September 2014 and implementation will be in two to three years' time. The outcomes will be: consistency in how Trinity pitches to each of the stakeholders; clarification on how College sees its future; and the alignment of Trinity's identity with strategic objectives. This will attract high-quality students and academics, and have an impact on rankings, employers and funders. It will thus facilitate access to new forms of revenue from new and existing donors, and articulate a stronger argument to Government for funding higher education.

The Dean of Students thanked Mr Mallee and Ms Coman for their presentation and asked if the committee had any questions or comments.

The GSU President noted that an all-staff survey had been mentioned and asked if there would be something similar for all students. Ms Coman responded that the team had begun to engage with student representatives and is happy to take guidance on the best way to engage students in the consultation process.

The following points were noted:

- A coherent identity was particularly important for an external audience. Specific stakeholders, including employers and funders, had been identified and would be consulted.
- Perception outside Ireland would be measured by consulting with current international students and drilling down into the rankings.
- Internal buy-in is important for existing and current external stakeholders including international students.
- Diversity among different identities within College would be addressed through a consistent, strong visual; a balance needs to be achieved among strong internal identities and a consistent outward-facing identity. There will be a core message with subsections relevant to specific audiences, for example, parents and students.

- Rankings have become an international driver for recruitment and Irish students are no different in their response to them.

In conclusion, Mr Mallee emphasised the importance of the consultation process and encouraged the members of the committee to complete the survey.

The Dean thanked Mr Mallee and Ms Coman.

SLC/13-14/12 Orientation Review

The Dean drew the committee's attention to page 2 of the document, which listed tasks necessary to successful orientation and a timeline. The following points were noted in response:

- Preparation should begin earlier in the new calendar year. In addition, March entrants should be highlighted on the timeline.
- A working group will be established and will be responsible for the detail of a general welcome document.
- Information available on open days and postgraduate open evening and orientation information should mutually inform each other.
- A representative from IS Services should be on the steering group.
- The smaller working groups should include a representative from Communications and Marketing.
- The Public Theatre rather than a temporary structure would be a better physical focal point during orientation.
- Three contact people from each School, one from each of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Graduate Studies Committee, and the Administrators' Forum, should ensure good communication with Schools.
- TSM, TR071 and BESS could be communicated with through the School structure as well as through the course offices.
- To ensure clarity of the interface between the website and the TCD portal, a SITS and/or person from the Academic Registry should sit on the web design group.

The Senior Tutor noted that new entrants would soon be surveyed about their first few weeks in College and suggested including questions on registration. She and Ms Coady agreed to work together on this. The Dean thanked the committee for their input to the draft document.

SLC/13-14/13 Refreshers' Week

The Dean explained that there would be a simple pilot scheme this year re-using the Here to Help banners and helpers, and the Library HITS scheme. An email would be circulated to students and leaflets from the services will be available at the stands. It was agreed that stands should be indoors in the foyer spaces of the Arts Building, the Hamilton Building, St James's Hospital, and D'Olier Street and that to use the latter half of week 6 for the pilot would capture late- arriving new entrants, students who were considering withdrawing from College, and also refresh new students who had been through orientation earlier in the term.

SLC/13-14/14 Strategic Planning Framework

The Dean introduced the document explaining that the headlines were mapped to the HESP document. She asked for feedback and comments.

The document was welcomed and the committee felt that it was important to strategise to maintain current services levels as well as to plan for innovation.

Ms Flynn commented that the area of Student Learning and Development is complex especially in relation to international students who need to be supported and that a post in this area is very necessary. Ms Erika Doyle and the Senior Tutor agreed.

It was noted that the present process is a means of preparation for and engagement with the College –wide process.

SLC/13-14/15 Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2014

This item was held over to the next meeting.

SLC/13-14/16 Unauthorised Allowances Projects

The Dean introduced the tabled document and presented the two proposed ideas. She explained that the proposals arose from discussion with the two Students' Unions.

The SU Welfare Officer, in speaking to the Safe Bus project, explained that similar systems worked well in the UK. It would run for 32 weeks of the year to provide for postgraduates. The committee was reminded that the funding was not for the routine business of College, but for innovative ideas that benefit students. The money could be used for both once-off and for extended projects.

Ms Coady noted that one of the documents mentioned the calendar year and asked if this was correct. The Dean said that it was not and would be amended.

Section B

There were no AOB items.

Section C

SLC/13-14/17 Provision for Students with Off-Books (with assessment) Status

Ms Flynn asked the Committee to note that the calculation of costs for services to off-books students was €7,500 for counselling and €1,500 for Student Learning and Development one-to-one sessions. SCS and SLD are happy to support the students who need the support. However, it should be noted that if /when the policy is implemented the service expects between 50% and 100% increase in numbers. The service is already over-stretched with current on-books students. If there is a way of funding the service for the expected increase in numbers then the services are very happy to engage.

The Dean welcomed the comment and briefly outlined the history of the policy, noting that permission to go off-books with assessment could only be granted by the Senior Lecturer and that therefore an unmanageable increase in use of the services as a result of the introduction of this policy was unlikely.

Ms Coady noted that the policy would apply to postgraduate students also.

The other C items were taken as read.