

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Draft Minutes of the Student Life Committee

15th October, 2014

Present: Prof. Kevin O’Kelly (Dean of Students (Chair), Dr Erika Doyle (Global Officer Co-ordinator), Ms Deirdre Flynn (Director, Student Counselling Service), Ms. Megan Lee (GSU President), Eanna Drury (Chair, CSC), Caitriona Sheil (Secretary, CSC), Ms. Michelle Tanner (Director of Sports and Recreation), Mr Ian Mooney (SU Welfare Officer), Mr Domhnall McGlacken-Byrne (President TCDSU) , Mr Seán Gannon (Director, Careers Advisory Service), Dr. Claire Laudet (Senior Tutor), Mr Declan Treanor, (Director of Disability Service), Ms. Claire Buttanshaw (Vice Chair DUCAC), Ms. Kathryn Smith (Library), Leona Coady (Director of Academic Registry)

Apologies: Mr. Adam Hanna (GSU Vice-President), Mr Brendan Tangney (Warden, Trinity Hall), Mr John Murphy (Director, Information Systems Services), Ms. Louise Ryan (Deputy CFO)

Absent: Mr Adrian Neilan (Commercial Revenue Unit), Ms Aoife Cox (Manager, Day Nursery & Crèche), Fr Peter Sexton (Convenor, Chaplaincy), Prof Emma Stokes (Registrar of Chambers), Dr David McGrath (Director, College Health Service), Ms. Jennifer McCahill (Chair, Publications Committee),

Present: Ms Helen Richardson (Minutes Secretary)

Section A

SLC/14-15/9 Minutes (A.1)

The minutes of the meeting of 16th September 2014 were approved by the Committee.

SLC/14-15/10 Matters Arising (A.2)

A meeting to discuss the Student Death Protocol with Deirdre Flynn and Global Relations has not happened to date. This will be organised. Dr. Claire Laudet, Senior Tutor should also be involved in this meeting as the Student Death Protocol is administered by the Senior Tutor’s Office. Recommendations will be brought to the next Student Life Committee meeting.

The Dean of Students met with the Provost and the Vice Provost to discuss how the objectives of the 2014-2015 Strategic Plan would impact the work of the Student Life Committee. The objectives for year 1 of the Strategic Plan need to be outlined. The Dean of students will complete a project plan which will include specific actions for each goal.

Student Life Website - A working group has been set up and a meeting will be organised to commence work on improving the current Student Life Website.

E-Learning – Prof. Tim Savage (Associate Dean for Online Education) has been invited to give a presentation at the meeting today and will focus on the student experience.

Dean of Students' Roll of Honour – a working group has been organised and a meeting will be set up soon.

SLC/14-15/11 Dean's Report (A.3)

Student Survey – A meeting of the national level working group has been held. There is concern that there is data available but the HEA have no resources available to process and analyse it. The Dean of Students suggested that only comparisons that are statistically relevant should be responded to. The final report should reflect this.

IUSSN – The Dean of Students chaired this meeting. There was enthusiasm to position the student experience at the centre of universities. It was agreed to share documents and policies, as well as funding models for services and other elements of student experience and strategies for funding. A Dropbox has been set up to facilitate this. There was also a strong interest to carry out research on the impact of student experience on academic development and also on needs for support.

Orientation Steering Group – There was a meeting held to reflect and actions to remediate problems were suggested. Some departments still need to improve. S2S and card collection worked very well. The Senior Tutor suggested that at the next meeting a representative from the SU and GSU should be invited to attend.

Quality Reviews – These are on-going. The College Day Nursery review visit was recently completed.

SLC/14-15/11 E-Learning Initiative (A.5)

Item A.4 on the Agenda has been moved to after the presentation on E-Learning.

Prof. Tim Savage introduced himself to the Committee. This initiative is being run on a 2 year pilot approach. The course offered is a Postgrad Diploma in Applied Social Studies. The learners on this course are typically mid-career, either wishing to up-skill or re-skill. They normally have limited time available and have family commitments but are highly motivated students.

The first year of the pilot has gone very well and the pilot is now into its 2nd year. It's a learning experience for everybody involved. The academic side of it appears to be solid and more focus is needed now on the support side.

The E-Learning strategy will go to Board and Council. The fundamental principles for e-learning students are that there is no segregation. These students are fully registered students, should be treated the same and recognised in the same way as on-campus students. Where possible they should have access to all services that current on-campus based students have.

When looking at competitors in Ireland, UK and USA it was noted that the higher the ranking of the University, the more they offered identical access to on-line students as full time on campus students.

These students have the same registration process through Academic Registry. One particular student who is in China had his Student ID Card posted via registered post after he had sent a digital picture of himself to the Registry. The students have the same borrowing rights in the Library however there will be a focus on electronic resources and digitalisation. The Health Service is available to these students, subject to the normal issues regarding resources and funding becoming available. The Postgraduate Advisory Service is the first point of contact and access to Careers services will be open to these students, again subject to resource issues. They are included in the GSU and their class rep is going to the rep training session on campus. The Services will all be available, providing resource and funding issues are addressed.

Moving forward, these 38 students are in week 4 and there is a need to understand how much they will access services. A study will be done to monitor the level of usage so that a realistic assessment of required resources and funding can be established. At present, a small amount of their student fee (10%) is going to the COO for distribution to the Services.

There is a need to ensure all cohorts of students are treated the same even if there are different funding models. Different sources of funding should not result in different levels of service delivery. An issue was raised by the Committee as to how would the COO distribute the proportion of the fee that was allocated for services, when some of the service areas do not report to the COO? The Committee felt that there might be a need for capital investment also as the nature of service might be different and delivery of services to these students may need to be looked at.

A combination of self-reporting surveys will be used to track the pilot programme. IS Services are currently working on creating a unique identifier in the student number of these students so that they can be identified. This will help in monitoring the service usage of these students and identifying areas that will need improvement. Resources for the service side of things will be included on a business plan for these developments and needs to be flagged clearly. Services have had very little input to date and students have had no input in the development plan. There is a need to be proactive. This course is still in the pilot stages and the 10% is fixed at the moment for student services. This will be reviewed at later stage.

SLC/14-15/12 Guidelines for Administrative/Student Service Reviews (A.4)

Ms. Elizabeth Donnellan from the Quality Office gave a brief presentation on the College Reviews. The revised guidelines incorporate feedback from the areas that have already been reviewed. A process map will be included. The Guidelines must go to the Quality Committee at the end of the month. A standard version of the introduction/general information will be written and circulated so that it can be used by every service. The self-assessment template will remain the same. The main issue raised by the Committee was the cost of the reviews. Services should not have to finance their own reviews from their budgets. There should be a central fund managed by the Quality Office to carry these out. Sean Gannon, Director of Careers, raised the issue on benchmarking. Services are asked to compare and provide benchmark statistics but this really depends on who you choose to compare yourself with. There is a need to ensure that the Quality Reviews are linked to the Strategic Plan. At present, all Reviewers are sent a copy of the Strategic Plan before they commence their reviews of an area. The Committee recommended that the self-assessment section should make explicit links to the area's strategic plan.

SLC/14-15/13(A.6) Report from Student Services and Capitated Bodies.

The CSC gave their report. Eanna Drury from CSC began with the positives. There are 118 Students Societies regulated by the CSC. There are over 38,000 members. During 4th week, the CSC fund events organised by societies. It's a free for all event, if the society is receiving funding from CSC. There were over 50 events free for all to attend. Despite cutbacks TCD societies perform very well by national standards. The Players win awards regularly. The debating societies do well both nationally and internationally. Some of the main highlights of successful societies activities in the last year were the Ball, the Awards Ceremony, the Orchestra, The Phil Society hosting Angela Merkel, The Arts Festival and Trinity Come Dancing. The CSC awards ceremony had the best attendance in a long time and the year book is going from strength to strength.

The negatives faced were that the society officers are experiencing very high stress levels. Some students serve on 2 or 3 committees and cutbacks are having an impact. There is no capital expenditure granted. It is becoming a real issue trying to book rooms on campus. This used to be done through the Enquiries Office, however this has become an increasing issue as the member of staff who previously booked rooms for CSC has left and there is no system in place to provide this service. If there is no space available on campus then societies are forced to hold events off-campus. Careers share the CSC concerns with this issue as employers are finding it very difficult to organise events on campus due to space issues. This issue should be included in the Strategic Plan implementation plan. The Dean of Students will follow up on this issue.

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Overall, the CSC reported very positive feedback. Deirdre Flynn, Director of Student Counselling offered to discuss a way forward to support officers under stress. A group intervention session may be offered to support these officers and individual support if needs be.

The Dean of Students will contact the service that will report at the next meeting.

Section B

SLC/14-15/14 Any urgent business (B.1)

There were no further discussions.

Section C