

Imperial College Union GSA Report
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Representation

The first meeting of departmental representatives from across College was held on Dec 7, which resulted in a number of issues being raised and a lot of potential for good practice to be spread from one department to others. The meeting was also the first opportunity for many Dep Reps to meet their counterparts and further understand their role.

Medicine:

- Students in the various campuses felt isolated from the wider Imperial student social scene. Students are dealing with this issue using Phil's newly created email distribution lists to communicate across Sections and plan collaborative events with GSA support.
- Careers Centre is difficult to access by students off of the South Kensington Campus due to working hours; this is being addressed with the Medicine AWO booking space for Careers Seminars at Hammersmith campus and hopefully other campuses soon.
- Students in a small number of courses have complained about the quality of their lectures, equipment, handouts and feedback; this is being pursued by the Medicine AWO.
- MPH students at St. Mary's have been promised, but not given access to the computer programmes that they need for their research.
- PG students (especially from campuses other than South Ken) agreed that they would be most likely to join club activities from 7pm onward during weekdays.

Engineering:

- Civil Engineering reported that their social activities were entirely funded by their department, which is much appreciated.
- Issues of unclear deadlines and course requirements is being tackled by their Dep Rep.
- EPSRC grant recipients got less money than expected in January.

Natural Sciences:

- Physics reported a healthy student committee of 11 members, and an active social calendar; the Dep Rep suggested emailing PDFs for display in departments to advertise and encouraging participation in social events. The department also contributes a significant sum to social events. The committee is organising a 'PhD symposium', at which all 2nd & 3rd year students are required to present their work either by poster or orally, respectively; they will invite all of their industrial collaborators. On student suggestion, the department was also now collating a central list of all companies they were in contact with.

- Centre for Environmental Policy has identified problem of only having one-year courses, which leads to a lack of socialising & departmental traditions. The rep also called for better use of alumni networks by the College, citing other institutions' examples, which could be a fruitful avenue for the GSA to pursue.
- Reps called for direct access to their cohort's mailing list, rather than through administrators.
- The restructure of Life Sciences remains extremely controversial with staff and students, even reaching national media coverage in the Private Eye magazine.

Business & Humanities:

- Second and third years in the School of Business have complained that first years have received better terms of fees remission for TA work than they have; this is being pursued with the deputy head of department.

Events

The GSA and the Badminton Club are together putting on a 'Postgraduate Badminton Night', on the evening January 25th in Ethos. 100+ postgraduates have already shown interest in response to an email question. Tickets are now on sale online.

A cinema night, showing The Social Network is being organised for 10 February 2011, 18:00

Several Dep Reps support the idea of interdepartmental sport, which is currently almost non-existent, particularly football.

Two successful Mingles have shown the potential for PG-only evening events in ICU's new facilities.

Other

After a lot of trouble setting up online ticket & product sales for the GSA, the necessary online product codes & categories have now been created and a short how-to guide will be given to the Events Team.

GSA Events cannot use the "What's On" calendar

The GSA Newsletter format is being experimented with; we are trialling 'single subject' emails to PGs and the reading and response rate seem much better already.

The GSA Facebook page is receiving over 1000 active monthly users and is being populated with events and photos by the events team.

Dep Reps shared methods of advertising events and representative services, such as the best way to contact students, distribute posters, send emails and disseminate information. Previously, this contact between departmental representatives had rarely, if ever, occurred.