

Council
17th January 2011

Imperial College School of Medicine Students' Union President's Report
A Note by ICSMSU President David Smith

It has been another busy term for ICSMSU and there have been numerous developments since the last report.

Negative Press Coverage

We were extremely unfortunate to have an article in the national press about the practises of our Sports Club on Wednesdays in the Reynolds Bar. Although it was a poor piece of journalism, taking quotations from ICSMSU publications out of context, incorrectly describing the activities of various groups, and painting an inaccurate picture of our operations, it did highlight some shortcomings in how we run the bar on Wednesdays. We are now striving to make improvements and have worked with representatives from college and the Faculty of Medicine to put together a strategy detailing some of the changes we are making. This will soon be put on our website and we are happy to take suggestions about how to improve. I am available after this meeting if anyone wishes to discuss this further. All of the changes were successfully implemented on the first Sports Night of term. This incident has also allowed us the opportunity to try to combat outdated attitudes to drinking amongst a portion of the student body. Steps are being made in the right direction in this area with the co-operation of the Club Captains, but this type of change takes time. I would like to thank the Operations Manager for all of his help in this matter.

Events

We have run numerous events since the last report. After Freshers' Fortnight, we ran an event in conjunction with ULU Medgroup at the Ministry of Sound, attended by over 800 medical students from across London. We have had four 'bops' this term, allowing the Light Opera Society and the Rugby, Football and Boat Clubs to raise funds and increase awareness of their Clubs' activities. All were well attended. The Bar Managers (both full time students at ICSM) have done a fantastic job in increasing usage of the bar on nights when we do not have functions – we have run three quiz nights and are increasing the number of small scale events in the bar to encourage a wider range of people to use the facilities. The Snow Ball, held at Amika on High Street Kensington, sold out three days before the event, with 500 attending in total.

We have had our first two RAG events – the Halloween and Christmas Collects. Both were very well run by the ICSMSU RAG Chair and his team, with the Halloween Collect raising a record sum of £15,177, contributing to the total of £18,847 for the Paediatric Department at St Mary's Hospital.

We ran a 'mulled wine & mince pies' event in conjunction with the Faculty of Medicine for the first years allowing them the opportunity to meet their personal tutors before the Christmas break. The event was also attended by the Director of Education, the Head of Years 1 & 2, and several other Faculty leads.

Gazette

The first edition of the ICSM Gazette was circulated towards the end of term. The publication includes reports on the activities of the Students' Union, updates from alumni,

news about activities in Imperial hospitals and the medical profession at large. Over 1000 copies were circulated to alumni of St Mary's Hospital Medical School, Imperial and current students. The quality of the material was considered to be a vast improvement on recent editions.

Academic

We have continued to work closely with the Faculty of Medicine on proposed changes to the course. I have been heavily involved in the discussions about a proposed restructuring of the final year along with the Academic Officer for Years 3, 5 & 6 and we have attended numerous meetings on the matter. Many changes have been made based on our recommendations. This is one example of the numerous changes to the course in which the Union has been involved. I have chaired four Student-Staff Liaison Groups (SSLGs) this term, all of which went very well. Areas discussed included an increased contribution of first and second year to the degree grade, a change in the way Distinctions are awarded, the quartile ranking systems in the clinical years, and proposals for new topics to be assessed in the clinical years. The Faculty have been receptive to the requests and suggestions of our Year Reps.

Representation

ICSMSU continues to represent its students to the Faculty of Medicine, College, Imperial College Union, nationally and internationally. I have attended two ULU Medgroup meetings (Medic Union Presidents from other London Universities) and a number of issues have been discussed, including the implications of the Browne Review on medical students, the motions that we are submitting to the BMA Conference and the algorithm of the application system to the UK Foundation Programme which disadvantages London students. We also discussed how to revive the London medical student newspaper, the first edition of which will be coming out on the 4th February.

We held our first BMA Intra-School Committee which was attended by over 50 students. We discussed the Browne Review and UKFPO. This year we had a total of 71 candidates running for year rep positions. I represent Imperial, UCL and Queen Mary's to the London Foundation Training Board and similar issues to the above were discussed at the first meeting.

Alumni & Careers

This year saw a 91% of Imperial students allocated their first preference foundation jobs, a huge improvement on the 75% last year. A lot of this success can be attributed to the hard work of the ICMSU Alumni & Careers Officer who organised a series of talks and spent a lot of time giving the students invaluable advice. We have also been helping unsuccessful students with their appeals to the board. Imperial is one of two UK Universities to not have anyone on the 'reserve list' for candidates who failed to be allocated a placement, something we should be incredibly proud of.

ICSMSU Careers has organised its first inspirational lecture. On 16th November, over 100 students enjoyed the "Mansfield Lecture" given by Professor Brian Gazzard (founder and former Chair of the British HIV Association).

The Alumni Association had its Annual General Meeting last term and organised a reunion for 2010 graduates which was attended by 38 guests. This type of event is crucial in order for us to encourage final year students to sign up to the scheme. The Alumni Association is now aiming to award a prize to contribute to the funding of electives.

Clubs and Societies

The Drama Society's autumn production of "The Destroyer of Worlds" (written by ICSM student Pranav Mahajan) was a huge success and they must be commended along with the Light Opera Society with their production of 'My Fair Lady' and Music Soc with their Choir and orchestra Concert.

Surgical Society's Trauma conference in November was also a huge success for the club and attracted speakers and delegates from across the world. My thanks go to all the club and society committees who have been fantastic since the beginning of term and worked so hard for their members.

Outreach

We ran our first Oxbridge Open Day which was a big success. We traditionally get a high number of medical students from Oxford and Cambridge coming to Imperial for their clinical years, and the day received some very positive feedback. I have given a number of tours of Imperial to prospective students who are unable to attend the Open Days.

I gave a talk to school careers advisors at a UCAS event as well as two talks to widening participation schools about the application process to medicine. The Vision Committee (a branch of ICSMSU Exec) ran its Junior Conference, also with the aim of encouraging students from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply to medicine. We also ran our final Thames Valley University Open Day for students who did not have the opportunity to fulfil their potential at school to study medicine at Imperial. This programme will be discontinued from next year.

Welfare

Our relationship with our neighbours has been problematic due to the noise coming from some students' houses. I have attended the Fulham Reach Ward Panel and have been working with the residents of this area in dealing with difficult student neighbours, as well as supporting our students who feel unfairly treated by their landlords and neighbours. I have already spoken to two groups of students about their unacceptable disruptive behaviour which is upsetting our neighbours.