

Council Report 13 October 2014

Pascal Loose – Deputy President (Education)

1. Handover

Handover took place in the last two weeks of July. Nat gave me a detailed introduction to the committees and projects that are going on and will take place in the future. We as the Officer Trustee team met many staff members of the College and the Union.

2. Mums & Dads 2014

One of the main projects during August and September was the Mums & Dads scheme. All departments apart from Aeronautics and Medicine took part and 9/12 departments have acquired the necessary participation rate of returning students to hit the 2:1 children per parent ratio. Computing initially made use of the scheme, but then dropped out in order to get a higher turnout by manually signing up students. We were in close contact with the Mums & Dads Coordinators of each department throughout the promotion. Some departments allocated the Parents and the Children based on tutorial groups instead of mutual interests.

All incoming students automatically took part, but were asked to indicate their interests to improve matching. Few did and it was difficult to contact the incoming students as they received their email addresses too late.

We sent out personalised emails to returning and incoming students explaining the scheme and asking them to sign up, which increased the numbers significantly.

On Saturday before the start of term personalised emails were sent out to parents to give them the details of their children. Departments had the choice of including event details and to send the emails to the children too. Some departments opted out of sending the emails from the Mums & Dads account.

It was noted that Parents are not trained regarding welfare issue. I will contact departments and collaborate with them to ensure that participants will receive the necessary training for next year.

A massive thanks goes out to Thomas Lim and Philip Kent who have done all the working!

3. E-learning

Panopto

Panopto is the lecture recording software that the College uses and in the past it was notorious for a bad image quality. HD cameras are slowly being rolled out across College and more departments and lecturers actually are taking part. I have been talking with the dep reps to identify which department would benefit the most of these HD cameras.

Starfish

Starfish is a software that allows tutors and tutees to flag any issues regarding their sessions. Both can raise issues to the senior tutor if the other is neglecting their responsibilities. For example if a tutor doesn't show up for their arranged session, the tutee can easily report this to the senior tutor. We have seen the use of Starfish as a group and are now closely working with the relevant staff members to ensure Starfish is rolled out carefully across the College.

Blackboard

I'm currently working with the IT department to enhance the experience students have with Blackboard. We're identifying why Blackboard is unpopular among the students and how it can be improved.

4. Rep Training

We have trained the majority of the dep reps in June and in September. I have met with all the dep reps individually and established a good working relationship and together we'll be working together on their aims. The year rep elections are currently open now and we'll be training the newly elected course and year reps in early November.

5. Postgraduate Representation

The GSU president, Nida Mahmud, and I are very keen to improve the representation structure for the Postgraduate students. We're currently revising existing roles and trying to identify where the representation is lacking and how it can be improved.

6. Feedback

One of my major aims this year is to improve the feedback student receive for their coursework. I have discussed the current situation in departments with the dep reps and identified which departments have example of good practice. The College is very supportive of my aim and is keen to work with me on this matter.

I will contact the SACA nominees of the last two years and try to formulate examples of good practice.

7. NSS Reponse

We're working together as a group to formulate a response regarding the NSS comments from the NSS 2013/14 survey. This report will be represented to the Vice Provost Advisory Group for Education in November.

8. SIMP

We're all aware of how tedious and incoherent the College information system is. This can be seen when students have to give information repeatedly for surveys, applications and updates, or when applying for College is riddled with uncertainty because various emails get sent. College is aware of this and are trying to improve this with the Student Information Management Programme (SIMP). Part of this improvement is to identify the processes and I am working closely with the College to ensure that they are considering the students experience and not just the registry's experience

9. Leave

I took 1/2 day of annual leave for moving.