

Imperial College Union
Union Council / 8 March 2022
6:30pm / Union Dining Hall

Council Representative (UG Medicine)	Aigun Gassanova (AG)	Present
Silwood Chair	Alex Auyang (AA)	Present
Council Representative (PG Science)	Ang Li (AL)	Present
Postgraduate Taught AWO (Medicine)	Anjola Onifade (AO)	Absent
International Officer	N/A	N/A
RCSU President	Aparna Pillai (AP)	Apologies
Postgraduate Research AWO (Medicine)	Aryan Niknam Maleki (ANM)	Present
CGCU (Wellbeing Officer)	Aurna Maitra (AM)	Absent
Disabilities Officer	Awais Seyyad (AS)	Apologies
Sports Sector Chair	N/A	N/A
LGBTQ+ Officer	Calyste Revel (CR)	Apologies
Ethics and Environment Officer	Camilla Billari (CBI)	Apologies
Postgraduate Research AWO (Natural Sciences)	Ceire Wincott (CW)	Apologies
Mental Health Officer	Charlotte Barot (CB)	Absent
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Christina Wang (CWA)	Apologies
Council Representative (UG Science)	Ding Ding (DD)	Present
Council Representative (PG Medicine)	Eman Adair Adair (EA)	Apologies
RSM Vice President Welfare	Emily Li (EL)	Present
Interfaith Officer	Seat lost under Byelaw A3.1	Vacant
RSM Vice President Education	George Morgan (GM)	Apologies
Working Class Officer	Grace Fisher (GF)	Present
CGCU President	Hayley Wong (HW)	Present
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Hilliam Tung (HT)	Present
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	India Marsden (IM)	Present
CGCU (Education Chair)	James White (JW)	Apologies
RSM President	Jasmine Crocker (JC)	Apologies
Postgraduate Taught AWO (Business)	Jenaifer Farhad Sethna (JFS)	Apologies
ICSMSU Academic Chair	Julia Komor (JK)	Absent
Postgraduate Taught AWO (Engineering)	Christabel Ofori-Atta	Absent
Council Representative (PG Engineering)	Lintong Li (LL)	Present
Union President	Lloyd James (LJ)	Present
ICSMSU Welfare Officer	Camellia Richards (CR)	Absent
Gender Equality Officer	Malinda Davies (MD)	Present

Postgraduate Taught AWO (Natural Sciences)	Manasa Reddy Sanaga (MRS)	Apologies
Knowledge Chair	Matthew Hamer (MH)	Absent
Council Chair	Michaela Flegrova (MF)	Present
Council Representative (PG Business)	Molly Gao (MG)	Present
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Nabeel Azuhar Mohammed (NAM)	Apologies
Deputy President (Welfare)	Nathalie Podder (NP)	Present
A&E Chair	Niamh McAuley (NM)	Present
RCSU Vice President (Education)	Nicolas Barykin Pankevich (NBP)	Apologies
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Rea Tresa (RT)	Present
Black & Minority Ethnic Students Officer	Rebekah Christie (RC)	Present
Deputy President (Finance & Services)	Sam Lee (SL)	Present
ICSMSU President	Samuel Hammond (SH)	Apologies
Council Representative (UG Science)	Stefano Fiocca (SF)	Apologies
RCSU Vice President (Welfare)	Tianyu Wen (TW)	Present
Postgraduate Research AWO (Engineering)	Tin Hang Un (THU)	Apologies
Deputy President (Education)	Daniel Lo (DL)	Present
Council Representative (PG Engineering)	Yusen Wang (YW)	Absent
Council Representative (PG Business)	Zhun Tang (ZT)	Present

In attendance:

Cat Turhan (CT) – ICU Representation & Advice Manager

Clem Jones (CJ) – ICU Governance & Democracy Coordinator

Mary Ryan (MR) – ICL Interim Vice-Provost (Research & Enterprise) [item 3 only]

Emily Roche (ER) – Executive Officer to the Vice-Provost (Research and Enterprise) [item 3 only]

1. Informal Start and Scrutiny of OT Reports

Members met in groups to discuss the OT reports submitted.

2. Introduction and Apologies

- i. MF welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- ii. Apologies were noted as above.

3. College's Partnership Working Group Consultation

MF welcomed MR and ER to the meeting.

MR noted the College's Partnership Working Group came out of a consultation at Provost's Board to look at how ICL approaches its partnerships, which includes philanthropic collaboration with the University. MR noted that ICL has strong existing processes for ensuring due diligence but that the Working Group aims to think more broadly about the overarching approach to partnership and has representatives from all the different College divisions. MR noted that there has been specific engagement with the Divest Imperial group.

MR noted that partnerships refer to something formal (i.e. a legal agreement) between the College and an external entity. MR noted that academic colleagues talking and collaborating generally is outside the remit of partnerships as that is captured within the College's academic freedom protocols.

MR explained that the Working Group wants to understand what the Imperial community thinks about how the College should approach such partnership working.

LJ explained that Union Council has typically tended to pass policy in a reactive fashion to issues such as College endeavours are found to be disagreeable, and so this consultation discussion sought to proactively inform the College's work in this area.

- i. HT asked MR to clarify the application process for College partnerships and the governance structures/committees that are involved. MR explained that there are different processes: one type follows a Faculty Research Committee → Faculty Dean → College Secretary → Provost approval route, whereas receipt of donations follow a different set of structures/different due diligence processes. MR noted that in either case the Provost's Board and ultimately the Provost and the President take responsibility for the College's partnerships.
- ii. SL stated that he felt ensuring checks occur on a regular basis for ongoing partnerships is important, in order to ensure that business partnerships are still productive and worth continuing. MR agreed that in general there does need to be some frequency of review.

MR asked if members agreed that international collaboration is essential for universities to advance knowledge and address fundamental scientific discovery to help Imperial to create impact for societal and economic benefit. All agreed that international collaboration was essential for universities to advance knowledge and address fundamental scientific discoveries to help us to create an impact for societal and economic benefit.

MR asked which values should guide the College's approach to partnerships, and if there are there any values which should be added beyond the College Values. SL asked whether there should be a value relating to a principle that partnerships should benefit the student body. IM queried this suggestion, noting that there may be functional research partnerships that do not directly impact students but nonetheless further the College's mission. MR suggested that this principle could be incorporated in a way that isn't 'veto-focused', for example, by emphasising the need to look for benefits for students in each partnership.

MD noted that. For the College's values to be used to guide partnerships, the meaning of the College's values should be defined. MR agreed that the scope to which one of the College's values could be applied to a potential partnership needs to avoid being so broad that it could mean anything. LJ echoed that this was why the College's values are a necessary criteria for partnerships but not sufficient. LJ suggested a group discussion on which values were felt to be important. In addition to the College Values, the following principles were suggested as key themes to guide the formation of guiding principles for the College's approach to partnerships:

- **Sustainability:** Sustainability was a key theme. Sustainability is not just a trend but is three-fold: "*the sustainability of the Partnership, the sustainability of the Partner (their green credentials) and the product's sustainability*". Sustainability would also encompass long-term support and investment to secure a positive future for the natural world and minimise environmental impact.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** The importance of aligning with the College's EDI strategy was one of the most commonly mentioned suggestions; this included the

diversity of the College's partners, the diversity within the partnerships, the treatment of employees (including investment and promotion in social mobility) and how the partnership will help promote EDI. Queries regarding "*only aligning with partners at the same level within their EDI journey*" were raised during the focus group session. It was agreed that "*shared ambitious and demonstratable actions should be considered at a higher priority than a shared level*", noting the added value of shared best practice.

- **Pre-existing partnership's privilege:** Established partnerships should not be given preferential treatment; community response indicated the intense feelings that all partnerships need to be checked periodically; these checks need to be embedded into the College's process and structures.
- **An equal benefit to the College and society.**
- **Social Responsibility and Countability:** Avoid tokenistic partnerships; suitable partnerships require a genuine, measurable commitment to change.
- **A benefit to Students – indirectly or directly:** This was a vital theme of the meeting with the Union Council. However, following the discussion, the students agreed that the "*success of a partnership should not be defined by impact to students*", though partnerships should endeavour to articulate how it does or can benefit the student body.
- **Not intruding on Academic rights.**
- **Transparent**
- **Integrity**

Furthermore, the consultation highlighted principles that the student body noted were not aligned with the College ethos; these included:

- **Tokenistic partnerships:** Partnerships need to demonstrate genuine commitment to change.
- **Unethical partnerships:** The partner is involved/has a history/traceable questionable practice in unethical practice either at a business, state or country level. The association with the College would "*create positivity for an unsuitable partner*".
- **Global popularity:** "*should not sway or dictate a decision*". Popular and short-term gain should not override or determine the long-term benefit to the College.
- **Financial benefits overruling morals:** In-depth conversations acknowledged the importance of financial gain to enable the College's mission but agreed that the College should not permit monetary benefit to influence unaligned ethics.
- **Highly focused on reputational standing:** The College community should be encouraged to be open minded and work with non-peer institutions (*Low- and middle-income countries, engagement with NGOs, Public Health Partnerships, Humanitarian Aid organisations*), enhancing the College's impact to extend its reach and influence.

Finally, MR asked if there were types of Partners College should be deterred from engaging with. Union Council noted the following:

- Unethical Research Benefits.
- Sole gain for the Partner.
- Political issues.
- Military/ Weapons.
- Reputational Risks for the College.
- Longevity issues.
- Fossil Fuels

MR thanked Union Council members for their time and participation in the consultation, and MF thanked MR and EC, who then left the meeting.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by consensus as an accurate record of proceedings.

5. Matters Arising (Action Tracking)

i. SL Meeting with Facilities, Health & Safety Manager to Discuss Cheerleading Training

SL noted he had spoken to ICU's Facilities, Health & Safety Manager, who will work on a risk assessment with the new cheerleading committee and the incoming DPFS in the new academic year.

ii. DL to update Union Council on Interdepartmental Coordination on Shared Modules

MF noted this action had been completed as update included in DPE Report.

iii. AP to update Union Council with more information on the Petitions Mentioned in last report

CJ relayed an update AP had provided *in absentia*: the life sciences petition was not initiated by life sciences students but actually originated from the business school, though many life sciences signed it as well. The faculty became aware of it and the department organized a town hall meeting with the life sciences undergraduates to address the problem. The maths petition succeeded and in securing online exams.

iv. SL to check if it is possible to filter activity registration requests in the opposite order on PowerApp so that the longest outstanding requests show at the top of the processing

SL noted that this is possible and the Union now has a new staff member focusing on the activity registration app. SL also noted that the Activities team are in the process of setting up new system to replace PowerApp.

v. SL to confirm whether CSPs can book Union Bar on Wednesdays/Fridays

SL confirmed CSPs can do so.

vi. Union President to publish materials condemning the College's decision to seek joint names for the Beit and Huxley buildings

LJ noted that IM sits on the History Working Group on behalf of ICU, and that the Union is working with the College to consult students on their thoughts regarding renaming Beit Building. IM invited members to join the focus group later in the week.

vii. Union President to work with the College to ascertain how the plaque commemorating Beit might be removed or altered

LJ noted that this action had not yet been completed. MF requested it be carried forward.

viii. Union President to argue for the 'divest today, engage tomorrow' policy to be included in the E&M Policy during relevant meetings of the SRI Policy Working Group

- ix. ICU's disapproval of the SRI Policy and E&M Policy, and its adoption of the 'divest today, engage tomorrow' policy to be publicised within a month of the E&M Policy's official publication

LJ noted he had delegated this action to SL as he sits on the relevant College meetings. LJ added that an update presented to President's Board about the state of the SRI policy work explicitly stated that ICU has taken this position

- x. Request an update to any improvements on the facilities and amenities as passed on Council in the 20-21 academic year

Action on hold until new Deputy Director of Student Services is in place.

- xi. Increasing the powers of Halls Committees

NP noted that this work is ongoing. NP noted that a meeting is scheduled with the outgoing Deputy Director of Student Services for 18th May to discuss this.

- xii. Set up a dedicated communication channel between the Hall Committees and heads of estates

Ongoing as part of the above meetings and work.

- xiii. SLo to bring design of proposed cubic testicles for ALERT to Union Council

A model replica of the cubic testicles to be proposed to be added to the ALERT statue were presented. LJ noted he had raised Union Council's proposal with a member of College staff who was amused by the proposal.

- xiv. Union President to check NM is on All Student Email circulation list

CJ noted this had been actioned. NM added that there may be other postgraduates who are not receiving the All Student Email. LJ agreed to check this with the Systems team.

6. Motion on Sports

IM presented the motion. IM noted that the current structure in place for supporting sports clubs across Imperial had been in the works since 2016 and proposals to enact the model made their way to Union council in 2018/19 academic year. IM noted that the proposal had been to for sports clubs to be grouped together common name and for financial and practical efficiencies to be implemented to allow students to join more than one sport under one membership. IM noted that this was first implemented last academic year, i.e. during the Coronavirus pandemic so not much sport happened. IM noted that now that more is occurring this academic year, many students have complained about the current model – reporting that: getting involved in sport is more expensive that it used to be; the membership offer confusing; and students are not getting adequate support. IM highlighted that the motion seeks to resolve to work with the sports department at the College to change the sports clubs provision structure. IM also highlighted the co-authors of the paper and noted that CSPB had previously considered the motion and approved it to come to Union Council.

- i. AA asked how the current structure had ended up coming to pass and resulting in attracting considerable complaints. IM noted that the implementation of the structure had been somewhat rushed, and that the Union staffing structure was different at the time.
- ii. AA also asked how to make sure that the propose to change the structure wouldn't lead to requiring another change soon after or wanting to reverse the

- changes in a few years' time. IM noted that the incoming DPCS has been involved in Sports clubs at Imperial and will therefore bring expertise as this agenda is carried forward should Union Council support it. MD noted that Union staff would likely be in role longer than a given DPCS and asked how the Union's structures would support the longevity of any laudable reform aims by a DPCS. IM noted that support functions would be executed by staff but with student input.
- iii. HT asked how it would be ensured that any changes will be effective and how the Union would monitor this. SL noted that the implementation of the structure for sports clubs currently in place relied on a few key individuals, whereas with the expanded permanent staff team that the Union now has following the pandemic there is a much better chance of ensuring of ensuring longevity of whatever changes are brought about now.

The debate concluded and the motion was carried:

19 for.

None against.

Motion carried.

7. Motion on Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme

RT presented the motion, noting that it was originally intended to be brought to Education & Representation Board but due to the calendar of meetings it was felt pertinent to bring it to Union Council. RT noted that she had heard from SF that this issue is particularly pertinent to bioengineering students; RT stated also being aware that it affects students in physics. RT reported that the current bursary application process is very untransparent, with students saying that are not sure what the criteria are. RT also reported some staff saying that they themselves don't know the criteria. RT stated that the motion proposed a list of actions and welcomed Union Council's contribution.

- i. LJ wondered if the motion could go further in explicitly noting that there are some depts (in fact an increasing number of depts) that have a blanket ban unfunded on UROPs, which LJ noted he supports. LJ also noted that it is challenging to ask the College for money (i.e. for increasing bursaries) if unable to suggest which existing expenditure stream that money should come from. LJ proposed the possibility of thinking about alumni funding for such bursaries and considering what the College's advancement division is currently looking to get funding for.
- ii. HW wondered if it would be possibly to clarify the wording of the motion to specify whether it is talking about the application for the UROP itself *or* about the UROP bursary process application process that is unclear (i.e., under Union Believes 3).
- iii. GF highlighted the need to persuade depts to fund people from low income backgrounds to be able to participate in UROP
- iv. RT reported that some UROP students are paid more than a PhD student per week.
- v. AA asked for more information regarding the situation/College policy on the aforementioned 'bans' of unfunded UROPs. LJ noted that most depts advise against unfunded UROPS but don't prohibit them, noting chemistry for example have a ban, whereas RT noted that bioengineering don't.
- vi. IM noted feeling uncomfortable describing a research internship as an 'integral' part of a STEM education (i.e. under Union Believes 1), stating it seemed to imply that those who do not take part in UROP have not had a fully fledged STEM

- education. IM proposed changing the description of a research education to be a 'valuable' part of a STEM education. RT accepted this proposed amendment.
- vii. DL noted that the number of UROP placements offered by the College had increased to 592 in '20/'21 from 531 in '19/'20. GF asked how many of the additional places were funded. MF actioned DL to look into this and report back to Union Council. DL also noted that there is a huge disparity between each department with the number of UROP placements that are offered, noting that there are much fewer UROP opportunities in the Faculty of Medicine too.
 - viii. LJ suggested that the actions under Union Resolves might be a bit overspecified, and that more information is needed on how the current situation impacts students in different departments. MF therefore proposed that instead of Union Council voting on the motion as proposed, RT and DL and any other volunteers work together to come up with more specific lobbying objectives. GF and DD volunteered to be involved. GF specifically asked if the group could look into how many UROPs were funded by depts vs how many were funded from bursaries.

The motion was therefore not voted upon and an updated version to be brought to a future meeting. Due to time constraints, the OTs gave a 30 second elevator pitch on their work:-

8. Union President Report

LJ noted that the DSRWG has been proceeding and various proposals are being drafted regarding seeking to improve the efficacy of Union Council.

9. DPFS Report

SL noted that he had been contributing to the College's proposed refurbishment of Reynolds Bar.

10. DPCS Report

IM noted that she has been working on improving student representation structures regarding student input on use of the Union's physical spaces.

11. DPW Report

NP noted that she was working on the security review with SL.

12. DPE Report

DL noted that he was trailing an online feedback board in departments.

13. AOB

Meet The Trustees

MF reminded members that coffee and cake would be served on the 18 May at noon in the Union Bar for members to meet the organisation's trustees and to ask them about their work.

Student Trustee Vacancy

CJ reminded members that applications close for an appointed student trusteeship of the Union on 30 May.