

Reports to Council

5th Week Council Michaelmas 2016

Jack	Hampton	President	RECEIVED
Sandy	Downs	VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities	RECEIVED
Orla	White	VP Women	RECEIVED
Marina	Lambrakis	VP Graduates	RECEIVED
Eden	Bailey	VP Access & Academic Affairs	RECEIVED
Beth	Currie	VP Charities & Community	RECEIVED
Tom	Wadsworth	Academic Affairs Campaign Officer	RECEIVED
Adam	Kellett	Access & Admissions Officer	RECEIVED
Eric	LeGresley	Clubs and Societies Support Officer	
Ronak	Patel	Disabled Students' Officer	
Bo	Zhang	Grad Academic Affairs Officer	RECEIVED
Connor	Broyles	Grad International Students' Officer	RECEIVED
Catherine	White	Grad Women's Officer	RECEIVED
Katy	Haigh	Health & Welfare Officer	
Meera	Sachdeva	International Students' Officer	RECEIVED
Catherine	Kelly	LGBTQ Officer	RECEIVED
Tuesday	Doherty	Womens' Campaign Officer	

Sabbatical Officers

Jack Hampton – President

This last two weeks I have been quite busy:

- On Monday last week I made a series of speeches at university council against the University of Oxford opting into the Teaching Excellence Framework and on the increase in fees for continuing students. The fight against TEF continues however, were successful in reducing the fee increase burden to those who started on course before October 2016.
- I began talks with the development office about a structural solution to the chronic underfunding of central student welfare services in Oxford.
- I Veggie pledged 3 veggie days a week and to cut palm oil out of my diet.
- I organised a common room executive officer training conference and delivered two sessions on how to approach difficult conversations and how to deal with conflict situations. Neither session received feedback under excellent.
- I helped two JCR presidents plan their year projects.
- And lastly I worked with our academic researcher on refining my academic structures enquiry.

If you want more information, perhaps in a funky video format, please watch my weekly video by following me on FB and Twitter 😊

Eden Bailey – Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs)

Hi everyone! Sorry I can't be with you all tonight, I am regrettably otherwise engaged sneezing explosively and being unable to talk in Newcastle :(

Hopefully by now you've all heard the great news that we managed to successfully lobby the University to reverse their decision to increase fees for on-course students. This is something we have been working on for months using all avenues possible. Not all of those can be visible to the student body more widely, and when we write these reports for Council, it can sometimes be so irritating that we can't shout more about some of the really big stuff we're doing. We're so glad this has come to fruit though, and now we can shout about it.

It's important to emphasise though, that the hard work fighting the changes brought in by the HE Bill is not over, and there is still a lot to be done. Inflationary fee increases for on-course students were just the beginning, and there are much bigger things on the horizon. Again, we are doing everything we can behind the scenes, and we will keep you updated as soon as we are able. There are already things you can be doing to help us though. Several common rooms have already passed motions condemning the TEF specifically and if yours hasn't then please get in touch about how to do so. If you have already passed a motion but want to do even more to stop the HE Bill, please do get in touch!

Also, if you haven't signed up for to come the National Demo - do so now! You can travel to London from Oxford and back with OUSU for just £3.66, and we'll also provide you with a safety briefing, emergency contacts, and other support. Literally do it right here right now>>> <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ousu-attends-national-demo-19-november-tickets-28525130433>

I was going to write about the other stuff I've been doing too but I'm feeling really grotty and my mum has pointed out that if someone knocked me round the head with a baseball bat I wouldn't be able to finish this off and you'd all cope so I should act as if that is the case and go back to bed... I will say though I have been doing daily 'have done' lists so if you do want to keep up to speed with what I'm doing literally Every Day, please do go to @OUSU_AcAff and see my posts there.

Thanks for reading and well done for getting through term!

Eden

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Beth Currie – Vice-President (Charities & Community)

Hey Council,

#VeggiePledge has basically taken over my life – but an amazing 1 in 15 Oxford students have pledged! You are the best and make constant immersion in vegetable emojis and paraphernalia totally worth it! Prizes and #VeggiePledge starter packs should be out by the end of the week!

Also we are still looking for chairs of our Environment Campaign (to oversee the Climate Justice and Food Justice campaigns, the Edible Planting group, and VegSoc) and Community Campaign (to oversee OUSU's homelessness campaign On Your Doorstep and the Living Wage Campaign) – so if you're interested in either role, please do get in touch!

I've also been trying to get more student involvement in the Christmas Light festival - there are also a wide variety of volunteer roles available for anyone who wanted to get involved.

Stay cool,
Beth

Community

Although our East Oxford Community Warden team is up and running again we are still in need of two wardens! The application pack is on the OUSU website – so if you want to make £45 a week doing good work improving community relations in East Oxford, then get in touch!

I've attended the University's Community Engagement Group and Community Grants Group, and a big thing OUSU will be looking at until the end of November is how we can feed into the Council's Local Plan.

I also attended OxHub's advisory board meeting and look forward to working closer together with them over the coming year.

Environment and Sustainability

I'm putting together a training morning for E&E reps to help better key them into the central E&E campaigns at Oxford.

I'm starting to work with Just Love Oxford to support them in their campaign to get colleges Fairtrade accredited.

RAG

RAG Lost went off without a hitch (ha hilarious) this weekend thanks to the amazing work of Ava Scott! It raised over £7,000 for RAG's 4 charities. We're all looking forward to the RAG ball this Friday - massive props to Teneeka and the ball committee for their amazing work!

Training

Orla and I are in the final stages of planning the Campaigning for Change programme to run this Hilary. If you are an experienced campaigner who wants to facilitate a focus group (which will run a short micro-campaign) get in touch!

Thanks a mill,
Beth

Marina Lambrakis – Vice-President (Graduates)

Hello Council, happy 5th week! We're past the halfway point of term now, so it's (hopefully) all downhill from here. Here's what I've been up to in the last couple of weeks:

Government policy

I've spent a considerable chunk of my time since I saw you last working on our response to the Higher Education & Research Bill, and particularly the Teaching Excellence Framework. Along with Eden and Jack, I attended several meetings in advance of University Council last Monday, and did a huge amount of preparatory work to make sure we were all fully ready to make our case. I think I can say that we acquitted ourselves extremely well, we put up a significant fight and not only achieved an overturning of the University's decision to raise fees for students who began their courses before Michaelmas 2016, but also succeeded in persuading many Council members of the validity of our arguments. Of course, that wouldn't have been possible without the support of the many students who signed our petition and supported our efforts to campaign against the TEF and the HER Bill.

Meetings

I've had several really interesting and productive meetings in the last fortnight. I've met a couple of graduate Common Room presidents and am in the process of scheduling more coffee catch-ups with them. I've also met with Bo, the Graduate Academic Affairs Officer, who'll be helping me out to prepare the way for the review of Postgraduate Research courses that I will be conducting, and I had a coffee/induction with Connor, the very recently elected Grad International Students' Officer, where we came up with a project for him to work on until the end of the term, focusing on those students who stay in Oxford over the Christmas holiday. Lastly, I had the pleasure to meet a couple of new Masters students, who got in touch about a very exciting film project they'd like to run in Trinity, so I've been helping them out with how to go about planning and actualising that - keep your eyes peeled!

Projects

PGR Review:

After a couple of setbacks this is now hopefully back on track. I've been working with Oliver, our Academic Representation Officer, to come up with a plan of action, and with the input of Mustafa (our

neighbourhood statistician extraordinaire) and Bo, everything should be sorted and ready to go by the end of term.

Postgraduate Study Conference:

This is an idea I had over the summer for an event that could kickstart the conversation on grad access. The idea is to open up doctoral study to prospective students in Humanities and Social Sciences, by running an afternoon where people interested in applying for a DPhil can get feedback on their project ideas from current DPhil students, whilst also getting the chance to hear about some of the amazing research going on around the University and to ask questions about the process of constructing a DPhil proposal and applying to a course. The call for participants is going out this week, and I'm on the hunt for a venue for Saturday of 8th week (3rd Dec) - if you can help me out, you'll get credited as a co-organiser, so give me a shout if you can lend a hand!

Graduate Welfare:

Orla, Eden, and I had a meeting last week with University staff who are involved in the running of exams, and emerging from that we'll be working with them next term on exam prep sessions, folding in some of what OUSU have done on Finals Forums and self-care around exam time to make sure people are looking after themselves and to try and demystify the process of sitting your exams.

Grads & Employment:

I've been in touch with a few people about the sorts of things we need to be considering as part of this project, and have doing some thinking about how best to incorporate the wide range of issues at stake. I'm particularly keen to do some work on right to work and Tier 4 visa restrictions, as well as more general employment rights, so will start to plan that towards the end of term.

Internal OUSU stuff

I spent most of Wednesday last week sitting on the selection panel for the role of Democratic Support Officer, which was super fun but also incredibly challenging. We interviewed a range of candidates and have now offered the job to someone, so hopefully they'll start as soon as possible! I've also been dealing with some Trustee Board stuff in advance of our away day next week.

In other news, I've taken a #VeggiePledge to go veggie 4 days a week. I'm also SO excited for the Festival of Cultures this week, organised by Meera (International Students' Officer) and the International Students' Campaign - come along to as many of the events as you can, there's something for everyone!

Til next time,

Marina

Sandy Downs – Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

Hi everyone!

As per, I've been busy in various committees and meetings over the last couple of weeks.

The NUS Zones conference in Stratford-Upon-Avon was great – I went to lots of workshops on hate crime reporting post Brexit, and also some on mental health first aid and helping NHS students in the Bursaries or Bust campaign.

I've been helping train staff in the new code of practice on meetings and events, which basically says that Prevent shouldn't really stop anyone organising an event – we're working on how to communicate this to students!

I had my biggest committee of the term, the student wellbeing sub-committee, which had lots of interesting agenda points – sorry would embellish, but lots are confidential. You'll know in due course!

I've been working with JSOC on tackling antisemitism in Oxford, and in a broader context am still working on a reporting system for micro aggressions and hate crimes.

Mind Your Head elections have officially been run! We have a new committee! CRAE elections are coming up as well, so keep an eye out for those and do encourage your friends to run.

I'm still organising the next sexual health testing day (Wed 23rd November) and preparing for the Equality and Diversity panel. Get in touch if you have any questions or concerns!

Thanks! Sandy ☺

Orla White – Vice-President (Women)

Hello Council! Since we last met, I've been up to some stuff:

- Work on the Harassment Policy continues apace, and I'll be talking about that in a motion to this Council.
- I've had multiple committee meetings covering student welfare and services, BME student attainment and BME staff satisfaction.
- The Queer Consent workshops have been drafted with the LGBTQ Campaign and are in the process of being finalised! I ran a training/drafting session earlier this week which was really productive.
- I've done a lot of First Respondent Training, as well as beginning to redraft the presentation and materials we use for that (not massively, just to make the content more accessible).
- I've trained common room officers in liberation, and why it's important to Oxford common rooms.
- Thursday evening, Sophie LaBelle is coming to speak at Wadham, as part of a joint event between University, Wadham, Linacre and OUSU – she's an artist and trans activist, and I'm really excited for her event! Come along, it would be great to get a good crowd in.

As ever, if you want to get involved, contact me at vpwomen@ousu.ox.ac.uk!

Part Time Executive Officers

Tom Wadsworth - Academic Affairs Campaigns Officer

I unfortunately missed the meeting of academic Common Room reps due to being at a tutorial however that is where I had planned to start collecting information on how to . On top of this I have come down with a chest infection so have unfortunately done little beyond pressuring for support for the free education demo and opposition to tef in college and through other channels I have access to.

Adam Kellett – Access and Admissions Officer

The majority of work at the moment has been turnover, as the Target Schools elections are coming up as well as the resultant handover. Soon, we will also have the first Access Rep forum in order to help JCR Access Reps with whatever they need, as well as to pass on information regarding interviews.

Connor Broyles – Graduate International Students’ Officer

I recently met with Marina and discussed a few areas that I could focus on for the remaining month of my term. The key target we identified was having a way for International Grads to be connected over the Christmas break. I still need to work out how to get that done, but I was thinking that a website (or simply a Facebook group) could be put together and people could be 'matched' for coffee/tea, pub crawl, etc. It would give them something to do while the University thins out, and allows them to meet others from different colleges and professions.

Catherine White – Graduate Women’s Officer

I met with Orla last week and got up to speed with all of the wonderful things she has been doing so far. We started running how to work on more specialised support regarding mental health and women of colour. Self care workshops are a possibility that we will be looking into more.

We also discussed the issue of better signposting abortion services, which would perhaps be a possibility to be run with the Student Advisory Service.

I'll be meeting with Orla and a representative from OSARCC (Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre) next week to discuss links between OUSU and OSARCC. Oral is also putting me in touch with the Equality and Diversity Unit Panel to discuss the harassment policy and incident reporting. They're also interested BME students' input on Oxford's application to the Race Charter.

Further on harassment policy there are a couple of initiatives being trialled by local police services that I am interested in seeing if I can bring to Oxford.

Meera Sachdeva – International Students’ Officer

With the Festival of Cultures kicking off this week, the last couple of weeks have been spent finalising the details and publicising the events. Our first event yesterday had a very successful turnout so we are hoping this will last through the festival.

Catherine Kelly – LGBTQ Officer

Over the last two weeks, the LGBTQ campaign elected new committee members, held a wonderful Queer Cabaret that raised over £700 for charity, had a direct action workshop with members of Lesbians & Gays Support the Migrants and attended a demonstration to Close Campsfield. I’m hugely proud of the committee and all the work they have done.

Due to a lot of academic work over the past few weeks, I have not made as much progress on my manifesto pledges as I would like, but I am hoping to continue working on the transition fund, and on creating better training guidelines for the LGBTQ 101 workshops.