

Union Council

Minutes from the meeting on Wednesday 23rd November 2011 at 13:00 in W310

Persons Present

Chair

Amy Coughlan (Events Management, Level 4)

Councillors

Alex Rawlins (Graphic Design, Level 4)

Ami Birrell (Event Management, Level 5)

Amy Finnigan (Dance, Level 5)

Cara Moran (English, Level 5)

Carly Whiting (Interior Design, Level 6)

Cassie Bendall (Business Management, Level 6)

Cleo Kamere (Health&Nutrition, Level 5)

Gemma Tricker (ODP, Level 1)

Georgina Arthur (Interior Design, Level 5)

Glenn Selway (History, Level 4)

Grace Harwood (Dance, Level 4)

Jeffrey Obieze (Science, Level 3)

Jemma Chatten (English, Level 6),

Joe Kinglake (Computer Games Design, Level 5)

Kim Birch (Business Management, Level 5)

Kirsty Gaffigan (Health&Nutrition, Level 4)

Martika McNamara (Health&Nutrition, Level 6)

Matthew Goddard (Fine Art, Level 5)

Matthew Vaux (English, Level 4)

Megan Steed (Psych & Crim, Level 4)

Mitchell Cook (ECS, Level 5)

Nathan Kempster (Psych & Youth, Level 5)

Nicola Berncastel (Business, Level 4)

Patricia Jones-Thompson (ECS, Level 6)

Philippa Maju (Photography, Level 4)

Rachel McGarry (Psych & Youth, Level 4)

Robert Jacobs (Bioscience, Level 4)

Robert Roue (Network and Comms, Level 4)

Sam Lawson (Sports Science, Level 6)

Shamaya Robinson (Psych & Soc, Level 4)

Sharon Oshingbade (Health & Wellbeing, Level 4)

Shelley Symonds (Early Learning, Level 6)

Shirllen Osman (Psych & Soc, Level 6)

Siobhan Clapson (ECS, Level 4)

Executive Officers

Jonathan Wright (President)

Sophie Millard (SOASS)

Zoe Porter-Watson (SOAAH)

In Attendance

Ben Juby (UCS Web Developer)

John Herd (UCS Network Manager)

Lee Pugh - Interim GM (arrived 2.35pm)

Matt King (Democracy and Representation Co-ordinator)

Tariq Effendi (UCS IT Support Manager)

Tony Russell (UCS Head of Estates)

Apologies for Absence

Abi Harper (Sports Science, Level 4)

Alexander Osbourne (Fine Art, Level 4)

Hannah Coleman (Interior Design, Level 4)

Janet Armitage (Photography, Level 6)

Jon Bruce (Psych, Level 4)

Katie Wright

Rachel Selmes (Health & Wellbeing, Level 5)

Rares Chirita Filip (CGD, Level 4)

Sam Bennett (Vice President)

Section A: Reporting Back

1) Minutes of the Previous Meeting (AC)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and valid record of what occurred when Council met on 26th October 2011.

2) Matters Arising (AC+JW)

Ellen Buck would like Social Work and English Reps to meet with her. She would also like to work with students at a forum on the 'not enough books' issue, and would like to know what time students want the library opening hours extended to.

3) Feedback on Motions passed at the previous meeting (JW)

Teaching Styles

JW asked for feedback

NK – Going through the Course Committee was preferred, rather than with module leaders, with information filtered through the Course Rep rather than students tackling them directly.

SR – Lecturers were taking matters raised by reps personally, as an attack on them by the Course Rep.

JW- Supporting Guidelines from UCS Union on how to deal with this issue are being written and will be presented at the next Union Council.

Library Resources

- Jon and Ellen have been in touch via e-mail with a number of Course Reps in regard to holding forums with them so talk about book lists, provisions etc. with little response.
- Library staff are not receiving reading lists quick enough. It is proposed that UCS Union will request that this issue is raised with UCS Exec again after the Christmas break.

Heating

- UCS Exec have agreed to hold their next meeting in East Building
- Director of Infrastructure is currently writing a report on the sustainability of Campus North. This will provide a number of options for UCS to consider.
- The Head of Management Information is working with the Estates Department in performing research into room temperatures around the campus. A thermometer has been put in every room and these will be checked regularly and recorded over the next few months

Chairs

- Currently, any broken chairs are being replaced by the new style of chair that has been introduced to Waterfront Auditorium.
- UCS agrees that students were invited to consult on what chairs UCS should have, but concede that this was not communicated as good as it should have been and will look to improve this in the future

Printers

- UCS confirmed that printing is done at non-profit and therefore, reducing the cost is not an option. Factors in this include the institution's green policies and the plan to encourage lecturers to allow for more online submission and feedback
- Quick Printer was suggested and this is being considered.

Webmail

- Work has already been done to make Webmail more accessible. Students can divert Wolsey and log straight into Webmail by going to webmail.ucs.ac.uk. The new intranet is being developed and this access will continue.
- In regard to getting e-mails more accessible in the ART block, these computers are not included on the UCS network because of the nature of work that students are doing. Therefore, Webmail will unfortunately have to remain as the only way to access e-mails.

Computer Availability

- IT are currently looking into having Adobe software installed onto the Windows computers in the Waterfront, however this will require a completely separate Adobe licence.
- Improved signage is being looked into for around the Waterfront that signposts which computers have specialist software and asking that some students have preferred access.
- A new text number for security is being set up for anonymous reporting in the quiet study areas. The number will be advertised to students soon.

4) Executive Officer Reports

SM and ZP-W introduced themselves and explained what their role was
JW gave a Sabbatical Officers Report on behalf of SB and himself

5) By-Elections Report (MK and JW)

Candidate interest and voter turnout for the By-Elections were disappointingly low. JW gave the reasons for having new management team at UCS Union & not having a Democracy & Representation Co-ordinator for a month.

By-elections for the Schools Officers currently vacant would be filled by the first week in December. A review for the Campus Officer positions has been performed and recruitment for the role has been postponed to 2012.

6) Course Rep Reports (SC, SM and JW)

SC reported her Facebook group issues with lecturers having concerns about victimisation. SC noted further that the Facebook group was fit for purpose, but that it took a while to get going. JW reported that he had discussed the issue with SC's course leader.

SM raised the issue that lecturers wanted to be on the Facebook groups too, but this was not wanted by the students.

Section B: Action

7) Election for Deputy Chair (AC +JW)

Due to ZP-W's election as SOAAH, she is no longer permitted to hold the role of Deputy Chair. An election for DC was run. Two candidates came forward: Nicola Berncastel and Matthew Vaux, both giving a 30second campaign speech. Council cast their ballots.

8) Amendment to Bye-Law 3 (JW Proposed)

Amendment to reduce the number of nominees required by Part-time Student-Officer election candidates who stand for positions which are voted on by a restricted number of students. The reduction is to change the number of nominees from twenty (20) to five (5).

Amendment passed

9) Course Rep Survey Results (JW)

JW announced that the Course Rep Survey highlighted the following issues as the most important:

Anonymous Marking/Online Submission

Students Using Technology in Lectures

Lack of Social Space

Council split into three different groups to discuss the matters as highlighted above.

10) Council discussion and vote on motions put forward

Group A – Anonymous Marking / Online Submission facilitated by JW.

Anonymous Marking (JW)

What

General agreement that the current system does not allow for purely anonymous marking, as student numbers are included on submissions.

Why

Agreed that whilst this is the case, the students are not aware of any victimisation and are not overly concerned that it exists.

Action

UCS Union does nothing.

Motion Passed

Online Submissions (JW)

What

Students are generally pro-online submission as it allows more freedom and is more accessible than having to hand in a hard copy.

Why

However, students prefer submitting hard copies because there is a sense of uncertainty that the online system may not work / assignment has not been received.

Action

UCS Union to ask UCS to provide confirmation e-mails when work is submitted online.

Motion Passed

Written Feedback (JW)

What

Students are receiving written feedback that they cannot understand due to the handwriting not being easily readable.

Why

Students prefer typed feedback and were interested to hear about forms of virtual feedback that had been discussed at the Teaching & Learning Day that JW attended – such as sound clips inserted in a document and videos of lectures scrolling through an essay.

Action

UCS Union to feedback to UCS Heads of School student's opinions.

Motion Passed

Group B – Students Using Technology in Lectures facilitated by MK

Dictaphones (NK)

What

Some students want or need to use Dictaphones in lectures.

Why

Students have an issue with lecturers as some allow them in class, and others don't

Action

Course Reps to seek agreement with lecturers on use.

Referred back

Laptops (NK)

What

Some students want or need to use Laptops in lectures.

Why

Students find the use of laptops distracting and often observe students using the laptop for non-course related activities

Action

Union to consult students on a policy on laptop use to be implemented University wide.

Motion Passed

Mobile Phones (NK)

What

Students get frustrated with other students using mobile phones excessively in lectures

Why

Students find the use of mobile phones distracting

Action

Course Reps to develop an agreement on conduct with course mates to take to course committees.

Motion Passed

Group C – Lack of Social Space facilitated by AC

Lunch Space in the Waterfront

What

Waterfront has no proper areas, just benches.

Why

Students feel bad using booths, but nowhere else to sit with friends at break time. This includes the old T block.

Action

Union to suggest to the University to perhaps create a common room.

Motion Passed

Social Space in Kai and Theta

What

Student Cafés are too expensive and you're not allowed to eat your own food in there. Wait for food in Room 1 can be too long.

Why

Students do not understand that UCS Union prioritise customers who spend money in their services as they raise money for the Union, who assist the students.

Action

UCS Union should review their policy on only allowing customers to eat food on their premises.

Motion Failed (an alternative outcome of asking the Kai staff to inform customers of any waiting times was suggested by JW and agreed by council)

Cash Machine in Waterfront

What

There is not a cash machine in Waterfront.

Why

Tesco and college are a trek, particularly in winter to go to get cash.

Action

Union to speak to Estates about putting a cash machine in waterfront building. If not, change the minimum spend rule of £4.

Motion Passed

Section C: Discussions

11) Forum with UCS Estates and UCS IT Department

AC rescinded the chair in favour of JW for this item.

Council notes:

- Campus North Improvements are being made.
- JH to hold a forum on IT Wolsey related issues.
- Library Laptops issue was raised. Their batteries were replaced over the summer. JH explained about the LRC and that the computers from it had been moved to other parts of campus.
- Students asked for year based email groupings for each course. The difficulty is that Part time students were not on the database. JH reported that set rules needed to be applied for this to be developed.
- Students raised the issue that Kingston sticks were often rejected by computers.
- JH raised the issue of students not reporting faults to IT. He added that phone numbers were given out of IT for students to call to report faults, and that all computers were numbered.
- Students asked if information promoting the IT helpline could be placed around computers.
- Students reported email forwarding issues; that some personal email addresses with different providers allowed them, and others didn't.
- JH to revisit access to webmail, as students are being asked to enter their password to access webmail after entering Wolsey.

12) Deputy Chair Election Results

Name	Round 1	Result
Nicola Berncastel	14	
Matthew Vaux	19	Elected
RON	0	
Spoilt	0	

Matthew Vaux was duly elected as Deputy Chair of Union Council.

13) Any other Business

- Nicole Taylor from UCS Marketing will be hosting the lunch at Kai and will be asking questions about why students chose UCS.
- KB raised the issue of wanting more Pods and Presentation Practice Space, and for there to be a pod request form. This will be discussed at the next Union Council.

14) Date of next meeting

14th December 2011 at 13:00 in W115