

**SE2-15.9.17**

**ULSTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ UNION STUDENT EXECUTIVE**

**Mintues of meeting held on 1st September 2017 via video conference**

**PRESENT:-**

Kevin McStravock (President), Hannah Rooney (VP Campaigns & Communications), James Colgan (VP Magee), Andrew McAnallen (VP Coleraine), Oisin Kinsella (VP Jordanstown), Meghan Downey (VP Belfast)

**IN ATTENDANCE:-**

Emmet Doyle (Democracy and Campaigns Coordinator), Avril Honan (Student Engagement Manager), Karen McKilllop (Marketing Manager), Mandy Mulholland (Academic Representation Coordinator)

**APOLOGIES:-**

Emma Bonner (Sports President)

1. **Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2017 – *to follow*

1. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising to be discussed.

1. **NSS Action Plan**

The Academic Representation Coordinator (ARC) attended to present two papers. Paper 1 – Course Rep Map 2016-17, and Paper 2 NSS results overview.

The ARC presented Paper 1, highlighting that we are missing Postgraduate Teaching and placement students. However, across undergrad courses there is generally good representation.

The courses which are flagged red show where there are courses missing reps, in particular Built Environment and the School of Sport are large cohorts which are missing representation. The system for registering with UUSU is important to note however, as it is not clear whether the reps are not in existence, or whether the Reps haven’t registered with the Union. Either way these are areas which should be followed up.

The second report shows the key questions in relation to the student voice within the National Student Survey and seeks to establish if there is a correlation between the amount of reps we have and the satisfaction with the Union and us representing them.

This table is ranked in terms of satisfaction, and a traffic light system shows the ratio of our reps against the performance in the NSS. Broadly speaking, the table does show the correlation between satisfaction and our Course Rep numbers, however there are exceptions.

Mandy noted that whilst the figures are interesting and the qualitative side is a good base, there are other factors on the ground which will impact – for example, Music in Magee – we have very few reps but came very high in terms of satisfaction. Conversely, in Politics for example, we have reps but still low figures.

The ARC asked the committee to consider:

1. How can UUSU use the information to improve the Course Rep system;
2. Where can UUSU use this information within the University to ensure support for the rep system.

Hannah noted that we could highlight the courses giving us the lowest scores and the lowest number of reps and target these areas for intervention. This strategy has been used by the Community Liaison Officer where statistics have shown the most likely to be reprimanded in the community.

Kevin noticed two different approaches:

1. HoS meetings with courses with low reps, and to establish the links at this level with the Senior Reps;
2. Low performance – join up with the Associate Deans for Education and see how they will handle the special measures and piggy back on this. The ADE and HoS are having meetings with final years at the beginning of the year with those in special measures.

The ARC agreed with this course of action, and especially with linking Senior Reps to the Heads of School and to keep this voice strong at a higher level.

Placement Year Reps: no emphasis is placed on this by course directors, however the committee noted that on this year support is still very much required. Therefore, a specific communication to staff should take place with this; more research is required in how to do this, however Mandy will add this to the general communication to staff. This will need to be coupled with specialized support for the reps on placement.

Kevin asked if there would be an easier way for staff to register students as reps. Mandy felt that if we could move the Course Rep elections could move online and be timetabled for Easter-time. However at the moment, the system we have is the best way to do this.

Andrew felt that online elections could help students become more involved, and it could lead to a culture change in terms of how students are selected and voted for in terms of formalizing it.

It will be important to get the message out across the student body about how they can be involved.

Actions:

* ARC to highlight and prioritize the areas of need;
* ARC and President to begin to plan the meetings which are identified as being needed;
* President to liaise with ADE’s to work in partnership with the plans in relation to the courses in special measures;
* ARC to highlight need for placement year reps when communicating with Course Directors.

1. **Course Representatives Plan**

Mandy noted that the Student Experience Forums (SEFs) are faculty based, however, moving forward the links at campus and school level will be important. These will also be more manageable students and SU staff; instead of a faculty meeting and a campus meeting – these will streamlined into one meeting.

The ARC sought approval from the committee to launch these as ‘Student Voice Forums’ which would include both group discussions, and panel Q&A’s with key University staff. These will be invite only to academic representatives.

Noted that the Provosts will also be holding campus meetings for all staff and students which could also be used to raise issues. s

Agreed:

* Student Voice Forums will take place on each campus, and be specifically for our Course Reps and Senior Reps.

1. **European Students Convention**

The ESU run a board meeting twice a year and a convention twice a year, wach one is a different host Nation. This October it is in Wales, hosted by NUS.

USI have asked Kevin to be a delegate and involved in discussions around Brexit, this next convention is specifically about Brexit and minority languages. This will cost the attending Union around £300 however for travel, and for food. This would come from the Conference budget.

Kevin sought approval for putting himself forward to be the delegate for this event.

The committee approved this.

1. **Any other business**

Senior Rep training – residential Friday 13th October into 14th October, the Academic Representation Coordinator invited all Officers to attend.

1. **Date and time of next meeting**

To be confirmed.