

Royal College of Science Union

Minutes of the 5th meeting of the Academic and Welfare Committee

Held at 12:00 on 8th March 2017 at the RCSU Office (Sherfield 214D)

PRESENT:

- Lloyd James – RCSU President (LJ)
- Michael Edwards – RCSU Honorary Secretary (ME)
- Sinziana Giju – RCSU Academic Affairs Officer (SG)
- Georgios Santis – Biochemistry Departmental Representative (GS)

APOLOGIES:

- Raven Connelly – Biology Departmental Representative (RC)
- Maximillian Moser – Chemistry Departmental Representative (MM)
- Emma McCracken – Maths Departmental Representative (EM)
- Abhijay Sood – Physics Departmental Representative (AS)

ABSENT:

OBSERVERS:

Meeting opened at 12:05. A complete record of this meeting is unavailable – the clerk was late and informal discussions prior to note-taking were summarised.

A. College Counselling and Mental Health

RECEIVED: SG, GS and AS led discussion.

NOTED:

1. Following on from the last Faculty meeting, Life Sciences (staff and students) have raised concerns about the long waits that students face to get help for mental health issues.
2. The consensus is that a College response of further investment on a College scale rather than on a departmental level is needed. Key staff members, namely the Vice Provost (Education) Directors of Undergraduate Studies and Senior Tutors, have been contacted by email.
3. AS suggested that key volunteers and staff members need to be brought on side, starting with student volunteers to apply pressure to encourage staff participation.
4. The committee is agreed to act on perceived low funding for student counselling for mental health issues. One key idea is to take an open letter to concerned staff members, student representatives and student volunteers across College to apply pressure for further investment.

RESOLVED:

- a. Reps present are to compile information from their departments and feed back in time for the meeting with the Faculty Committee next week.

Minutes

Academic and Welfare Committee (What Meeting)

B. Departmental Representative Reports

RECEIVED: The DepReps delivered their reports.

NOTED:

5. Biochemistry (GS)

- o There have been no major issues recently.
- o Third years have begun final projects and previous issues with dodgy or lazy allocations have been resolved. Overall, GS is confident with departmental direction.
- o The next SSC is Tuesday, and nominations for FoNS and President's awards have been sought from the student body.
- o UROPs have proven popular, although an issue has arisen with Management Year (MY) students seeking funding for the placements. Departmental agreement has been to prioritise funding for 'straight' Biochemistry students, leaving MY students to self-fund.

6. Physics (AS)

- o Town halls have been happening, where students and staff can engage with each other and provide their feedback directly on the course.
- o 3rd and 4th year events were not well attended but earlier years saw good turnout.
- o A full report is to be sent to be contained in the minutes as an accurate record.

RESOLVED:

- b. To accept the received reports.

Meeting closed at 12:40.