# College Forum Meeting Minutes

##  ***Postgraduate* Taught Students *Cross-College Forum***

##

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  **Date:  11/03/2024** | **Time: 12:00pm** |  **Location: Zoom** |
|  Chair:  |  Micaela Panes (VP Postgraduate)  |
|  Minutes:  |  Aoife Regan-Foley |
|  **Apologies:** |
| Staff: | Student reps: |
| * Sian Ballard (BLS College Education Manager)
 | * Nkosi Yearwood (OPTOM)
* Leon Roelleke (CARBS)
* Kelly Nigrel (BIOSI)
* Ana Seilnacht (PHYSX)
* Javni Vipulkumar Brahmbhatt (PHYSX)
 |
|  **In Attendance:**  |
| Staff: | Student reps: |
| * Julie Gwilliam (PGT Dean for PSE)
* Micaela Panes (VP Postgraduate)
* Michaela Hennessy (Academic Representation Coordinator)
* Paul Jones (IT Services)
* Kath Evans (College Education Manager PSE)
* Sian Lewis (College Education Manager AHSS)
* Poppy Dunbar-Jones (Student Advice & Advocacy Coordinator)
* Elizabeth Wren-Owens (Dean for AHSS)
* Amanda Tonks (Postgraduate Dean for BLS)
* Nicola Jones (Library Services)
 | * Sayantan Das (CARBS)
* Weronika Reczycka (CARBS)
* Raashi Khanna (CARBS)
* Nawajesh Khan (SHARE)
* David Payne (MEDIC)
* Matthew Jukes (MEDIC)
* Caroline Schreiber (MATHS)
* Darshan Dilipkumar (ARCHI)
 |
|  **Update on Actions from the Previous Panel:** |
| No updates submitted.  |

|  |
| --- |
|  **Rep Feedback: CARBS**  |
| **Sayantan Das**1. Asked for guest lectures on days when classes are not run and not in the week of assessments.
2. Guest speakers have been arranged for the summer period.
3. Programme director has been meeting frequently.
4. Garden plan is ongoing and hoping this can be set up for when the weather is nicer.
5. Sporting event was unable to be arranged due to timetabling but there has been interest and discussion surrounding debating activities.

**Weronika Reczycka**1. Weekly time slot with careers team has been well received.
2. Events around culture have also had interest due to the diverse cohort to have at a school level.
3. Issues about deadlines with lecturers have been worked out.
4. Exam locations has been an issue that has been brought up due to them often being held in far locations, but the cohort is aware that this cannot be changed for this year.

**Raashi Khanna**1. Concerns about group projects and unequal efforts being made but hopefully this has been resolved with the programme director.
2. Concerns about the pending trip but they are working towards this and working with the programme director.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: 4, 5 & 9 Who: Liz Wren-Owens,** **When: ASAP Sian Lewis, Micaela Panes**  |
|  4&5) Liz Wren-Owens (LWO) queried whether some of the events that there was interest in during the last cross college forum have been set up. 4&5) Micaela Panes (MP) offers her help with advertising events in newsletters for any events that schools may be having for postgraduate students.9) LWO explained that the school does not allocate rooms and it is instead done by the central exams team who allocate depending on timing and capacity. 9)MP asked where the exam was held that had caused these issues and Weronika agreed to message this detail once she had found out. 9)Sian Lewis (SL) explained that the allocation is done based on time and capacity and requested information about what exam venue caused concern. Also explained that it has been harder to find exam venues since Covid as the capacities and function of venues has changed slightly.  |
|  **Rep Feedback: SHARE**  |
| 1. Lectures across all the disciplines and questions about their dissertations took place.
2. There have been more reps joining, two reps for Conservation, but there are still none for Archaeology.
3. Creation of a feedback form by Nawajesh Khan which was translated into Welsh. Student outreach was then carried out to get students to provide feedback.
4. Previous Rep Coordinator left their role, and this has now been filled so there will be a school wide SSP.
5. Postgraduates would like a common room as there is one for PGRs but there is not one for PGTs.
6. Has been feedback that some deadlines are too close and too early.
7. Has been some low marks received and students believe that there was miscommunication surrounding the structure of assessments and the expectations. They also felt that the feedback provided on these was not adequate. The low marks were experienced mostly by those returning to education. This was on a core module.
8. Positive feedback has been received about personal tutors.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: 5 & 7 Who: Liz Wren- Owens** **When: ASAP & Micaela Panes**  |
| 1. LWO queried whether there were any UG or PGT common rooms in the JP building for other schools. SL confirmed that there was not as the focus had always been placed on facilities being required for teaching.

 7)LWO asked for more information surrounding the essay marks that were received. When this was given, asked to report back after the SSP had taken place and inform the forum of what actions have been taken.5)MP also queried if students were aware of the PG study lounge that is down the road slightly from the John Percival. Nawajesh confirmed that they were aware, but students had expressed a desire for one within the JP also. |
|  **Rep Feedback: MEDIC**  |
| **David Payne**1. Nothing to bring to college forum as distanced learner and nothing has been brought up.
2. Has expressed happiness with the systems that are in place for distance learning and that many of the cohort appear happy with their experience.

**Matthew Jukes**1. SSP worked well and there is good communication with course leads.
2. HCARE library support has been good and the help in the library has been appreciated.
3. Issue was raised about international student scholarships, and this was directed to the scholarships department.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: Who: When:** |
| No Actions/Key decisions required. MP and Amanda Tonks (AT) were glad to hear that the distance learning experience was so positive. |
|  **Rep Feedback: MATHS**  |
| 1. The semester has been much more positive as there has been a movement into optional module with smaller class sizes meaning that issues can be easily addressed within the groups and additional targeted time with lecturers.
2. The issue surrounding 4-hour classes raised last time has been ongoing and there is hope that this will be changed for the next academic year.
 |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: When:** |
| N/A |
| **Rep Feedback: ARCHI** |
| 1. Was an issue regarding LinkedIn learning and there are lots of core modules that are linked to this. Basic knowledge is needed of systems that cannot happen in scheduled class time, so students wanted to utilize LinkedIn learning for this reason.
2. There is no proper interaction between courses and there is a proposition for a day after exams for discussion and creating a link between the different cohorts.
 |
| **Action/Key Decision: 1 & 2 Who: Paul Jones &****When: Julie Gwilliam**  |
| 1. Paul Jones (PJ) explained that it was discovered there was not enough value in signing the entire University up to LinkedIn Learning. However, schools can still sign up and so this may be worth raising with them.
2. Julie Gwilliam (JG) asked for clarification of the exact course that Darshan was studying to investigate this issue more. Will also investigate this with the school.
3. JG praises the effort being made to unite the students across the school.
 |
| **Staff Updates:**  |
| **College Education Update AHSS: Liz Wren-Owens & Sian Lewis** * Congratulated Micaela Panes on her success in being re-elected as VP for Postgraduate Studies.
* Reminder to Reps about the Postgraduate Survey for Student Experience. The survey has two parts and the findings have been used in AHSS to make changes to timetabling of the dissertation and understanding that PGT students needed more awareness raised of the support available to them.

**College Education Update BLS: Amanda Tonks*** Also emphasised the importance of CUPS and the module enhancement survey to allow the improvement of modules.
* HCARE asked for their dissertation CUPS to run at a different time because they run on a different timetable, and this has been launched today.

**College Education Update PSE: Julie Gwilliam & Kath Evans** * No further updates but stresses the importance of CUPTS.

**University Library Services: Nicola Jones** * ID card access to the library after 6pm is required and so students will need cards updated monthly. Students need to tap cards on encoders to ensure they are updated particularly for Bute, Trevithick, and Science. Can ring security centre for the door to be opened remotely.
* Loan entitlement has been increased to 50 books at one time.
* May be some disruption over Easter to the science library as there is a new access ramp being fitted.
* Bute lift is due to be completed before the exam period.
* Extensive research into student reading habits was carried out with high engagement and this will be fed back into developing the collection management and acquisitions habits going forward.
* Scaffolding on ASSL due to be removed by easter with the roof being completed by then.
* New lighting, carpets, and refurbishment due to occur over summer on the top floor of ASSL (end of exam period - 10th September there will be limited access to the floor).
* Hoping to start opening the Postgraduate Study Zone for 24 hours soon, there have been risk assessments done. Security numbers will be provided in the building and users will be encouraged to download the safezone app. Library security guards will also patrol the space twice during the night. They are currently waiting for CCTV to be installed before the space can be open and scaffolding to be taken down from Aberconway. This will be opened on a pilot to begin with just to see if opening 24 hours is doable.

**Student Voice: Michaela Henessy** * Congratulations given to anyone who ran in the elections and thanks given to everyone that let the voice team run outreach in and around University buildings.
* First all-female Elected Officer Team for the first time elected on International Women’s Day.
* Check out the newly Elected Officer Team here: https://www.cardiffstudents.com/news/article/secret/Spring-Elections-Results-2024-Canlyniadau-Etholiadaur-Gwanwyn-2024/

**Student Advice: Poppy Dunbar-Jones** * No updates but contact Advice here: Student Advice on 02920 781 410 or at Advice@cardiff.ac.uk.

**Sabbatical Officer Update: Micaela Panes (VP Postgraduate)*** Thank to everyone who helped to share petition and information about the Welsh Government cuts to PG funding. Over 2,000 signatures were gained in just under 2 months and went to petitions committee last week who are requesting further information from the education minister. It has been recommended that they fulfil a quality impact assessment to share evidence of what the impacts will be.
* Postgraduate trips dates are going to be released soon, the current places that are being considered are Oxford, Stonehenge, and Tenby but the team are open to any suggestions. Funding has been given to aid with these so tickets will be priced at £5.
* Culture Cwtch is on the 12th of March in the SU to celebrate the diversity of the student body.
* Let Micaela know if there is anything that anyone ever wants to put in the PG newsletters that she sends to all postgraduates then let her know.

**University IT Services: Paul Jones** * You can get updates on the status of key IT services via the Status Page - https://status.cardiff.ac.uk/
* Uni IT: https://intranet.cardiff.ac.uk/students/it-support/it-service-desk
* Turn It In is undergoing maintenance so would have been unavailable while this is carried out for a couple of hours on the 16th of March (advertised on student intranet and IT status page).

**University Catering Service:*** All prices are benchmarked against the highstreet and Cardiff University sits significantly cheaper than the mainstream high street café and restaurant offer (excluding Greggs).
* Customers bringing their own cup for a hot drink can purchase a tea/coffee for as little as £1.20
* A sandwich/roll can be purchased from £2.20 – with a highstreet café starting price being this or higher
* Value meal deals available across our offer
	+ CUFoods Roll + packet crisps + can drinks = £3.70 - that is the equivalent to the drink being free
	+ CUFoods Panini + packet crisps + can drink = £5.00 - that is the equivalent to the drink being free
	+ 12oz Soup + CUFoods Roll – saving of £1.20
	+ Other meal deals available throughout the day
	+ Loyalty App – Free Cardiff University Food app – available free from app store – no emails sent by CUFoods to account holders
		- Buy 9 get 10th Free – equivalent to 10% minimum discount on purchases
			* Hot Drinks
			* Smoothies/Iced Coffees
			* Piece fresh fruit
		- 4 loyalty points to every £1 spent (each point is worth 1p) – equivalent to 4% discount
* Future Innovation – coming soon!
* CUFoods Club – opportunity to pre-load funds onto card which offers enhanced discounts to club members
	+ 20% + discount on all hot counter meals – this means that a hot meal from Trevithick for CUFoods Club members will be £4.38 - £4.04 depending on plan purchased
	+ 10% discount on hot drinks
	+ 5% discount on CUFoods products
	+ Buy 9 get 10th free on CUFoods paninis (depending on plan bought in to) – equivalent to 10% discount
	+ Buy 9 get 10th free on CUFoods rolls (depending on plan bought in to) – equivalent to 10% discount
	+ Enhanced loyalty points dependent on plan
 |
|  **Any Other Business:**  |
| **BIOSI:** Reps who noted apologies send the following feedback:I am pleased to report that we currently do not have any major unresolved issues. All feedback received during the SSP have been addressed accordingly. Regarding the MSc Big Data Biology course, we faced some troubles with IT, specifically our POSIT license expired, which temporarily hindered coursework. Thankfully, the module leads have looked into this issue.Additionally, the MSc Global Ecology faced a problem with certain lecture cancellations, but this issue has been addressed and resolved. As for the Integrated Master’s course, there have been some concerns raised about coursework and assignments which are being looked into. |