# College Forum Meeting Minutes

##  ***Postgraduate Research Cross-College Forum***

##

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  **Date: 21/03/2024** | **Time: 14:30pm** |  **Location: Zoom** |
|  Chair:  |  Micaela Panes  |
|  Minutes:  |  Aoife Regan-Foley |
|  **Apologies:** |
| Staff: | Student reps: |
| * Sian Lewis (AHSS Education Manager)
* Sian Ballard (BLS Education Manager)
 | * Alexander Elliot (ENCAP)
 |
|  **In Attendance:**  |
| Staff: | Student reps: |
| * Julie Gwilliam (PGT Dean for PSE)
* Micaela Panes (VP Postgraduate)
* Michaela Hennessy (Academic Representation Coordinator)
* Paul Jones (IT Services)
* Jane Harding (Deputy Head of Student Advice)
* Elizabeth Wren-Owens (Dean for AHSS)
* Amanda Tonks (Postgraduate Dean for BLS)
* Afia Ahmed (Doctoral Academy)
* Amanda Rouse (PGR Quality and Operations)
* Rhian Howells (
 | * Jack Morewood (ARCHI)
* Stephen Miles (COMSC)
* Layla Sadeghi Namaghi (MATHS)
* Hannah Baird (PHRMY)
* Kamal Hadad (ARCHI)
 |
|  **Update on Actions from the Previous Panel:** |
| No Updates.  |

|  |
| --- |
|  **Rep Feedback: PHRMY**  |
| 1. Period Dignity campaign running in school inspired by the one run in the SU which has been taken over by staff and is incorporated into the school.
2. Signposting board has been set up based on discussion from the last Cross-College Forum. Board has barcodes on it which link students to University Wellbeing Team and Student Union Advice Team. Also has been an emphasis on creating a better wellbeing environment involving more socials, journal clubs and coffee mornings for people to chat if they have any problems. Struggling to find socials that are inclusive (especially alcohol free), affordable and accessible.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: 2 Who: Micaela Panes When: ASAP** |
| 2)Micaela Panes (MP) asked if there was anything that the SU could do to provide support. Hannah let her know that they were ok, just working on better delegation of tasks. MP also informed Hannah of the funds that are available to support these events. |
|  **Rep Feedback: MATHS**  |
| 1. PGR panel happened last month where there is less feedback in general compared to the year previous. Most feedback has already been dealt with by the school.
2. Lots of PGR students were not in favour of the new teaching contracts as things had already been going well before their introduction to the school. School will also be feeding back to the University some of the challenges on their side.
3. PGRs asked if they could know which students need help with accessibility or which specific adjustments students needed.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: 2 & 3 Who: Amanda Tonks, Liz Wren-Owens and Micaela Panes When: ASAP** |
|  3)Amanda Tonks (AT) shares that there is a new scheme coming in for disability passports. 3) Liz Wren-Owens (LWO) stressed that staff are never aware of the specific disabilities and instead module leaders are informed of the adjustments that are required for each student which should then be shared with any other teaching staff on the module. Staff are aware of the adjustments but not disabilities. Suggested that Julie speak to the PGR tutor for Math’s to make sure that communications regarding adjustments for students are sent to the whole teaching team including PGR tutors.2) MP a survey is being carried out which will be sent to the Deans to determine, and more information shall be shared about this at the end of the meeting. |
|  **Rep Feedback: ARCHI** |
| 1. No more thefts have been reported.
2. No longer have access to LinkedIn learning but not many people have been too disappointed about this.
3. Has been a decline in engagement in PGRs.
4. Has been interest expressed in the creation of a quiet office for PGR’s and collaborative one to allow people to get together and discuss.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: Who: When:** |
| 4)Kamal expressed how he attended a meeting about the use of SU rooms for this. ARCHI are also exploring the possibility of using laptops as replacements for desktops to allow for remote working. Laptops are only given for the duration of study. Was a suggestion for them to start a PGR society so that they are able to book SU rooms to utilize these for study and increase the engagement with PGRs. 3) Hannah also echoes that there is a lack of engagement from 1st and 2nd year PGR students but as they are a small school this is not too concerning at the moment. 3) MP found that new students were less likely to engage and so they started to attend induction to encourage new students to utilize the designated study areas.  |
| **Rep Feedback: ARCHI**  |
| 1. Plan to transition to laptops in ARCHI as replacement for desktops to allow for more remote working.
2. Issues around the contracts concerning who line managers are supposed to be and casualization of PGR employment.
 |
| **Action/Key Decision: 2 Who: Micaela Panes When:** |
| 2)MP asked Kamal if he could fill out the feedback form in the chat regarding this matter as most of the questions on there are aimed at these concerns and this will then be used to improve those contracts. |
|  **Rep Feedback: COMSC**  |
| 1. Had a PGR committee meeting which went well.
2. Asked if the University Wide Committee Culture Fund is available for PGRs too. MP confirmed that it was, and that the information would be shared with students following the meeting.
3. They queried whether this could be used on team bonding activities.
 |
|  **Action/Key Decision: Who: When:** |
| **3)**Julie Gwilliam (JG) explained that the Doctoral Academy Fund has been paused while the new fund is live. Advised Stephen to test whether the fund will accept this, is unsure on what the outcome would be, but community is at the heart of research.3) LWO provided further clarification saying that the activities covered are sandpits, workshops, showcase events, invited speakers and establishment of networks. It is about having a positive research culture.  |
| **Rep Feedback: GEOPL** |
| 1. All issues have been resolved at SSP level.
2. International site visits have gone well and were beneficial to the program.
 |
| **Staff Updates:**  |
| **College Education Update AHSS: Liz Wren-Owens** * Reminder about research culture grant.
* Congratulations to Micaela on her re-election.
* Review of ex-circ policy for PGR students with focus groups being arranged over the next week.
* PGR celebration week is being planned to give more of a profile to PGR students.
* Held the first ESEC for PGRs has been held in AHSS and hopefully student reps are able to come to the next one.

**College Education Update BLS: Amanda Tonks** * Also have an ex-circ focus group being held tomorrow.
* Amanda has been working on reasonable adjustments and how inclusion of paper is done in PGR studies.

**College Education Update BLS: Julie Gwilliam** * Focus group for ex-circs in PSE is being held next Monday.
* New sustainability network will be embedded into the celebration week in June. Next session for the network is on 25th April and they are online and in person. Opportunity to discuss how sustainability may relate to research.

**PGR Quality and Operations: Amanda Rouse** * Big review of ex-circs and policy and procedures around interruptions of study and extensions. Trying to find out from students what works well and what doesn’t work well. Guidance will be put together for the first time about reasonable adjustments to encourage schools to think about an inclusive approach to education. Putting together guidance for the inclusion of papers in thesis.
* Preparing for your VIVA and how to submit your thesis workshops were put on and they were incredibly successful. Requests that if anyone has any thoughts about any other topics which may be required then they are emailed in.

**Doctoral Academy: Afia Ahmed** * Starting to see an increase in engagement but not as many as had hoped.
* Development Fund and Research Culture and Community Fund, the deadline is approaching soon.
* Development Fund had 63 applications for £500 of which 16 were funded across a good spread of the colleges.
* Focus groups have been running to find out what students want.
* Working with Micaela on the Celebration week.
* Students need a bit of nudge to book onto services.
* Have reduced communication on what’s open from twice a month to once a month.
* Trying to recruit a PGR intern to look at the diversity, equity and inclusivity in the program.
* Keen to work with student reps and would love attendance from some reps at these meetings.

**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: Jane Harding** * No updates but contact Advice here: Student Advice on 02920 781 410 or at Advice@cardiff.ac.uk
* Would love to hear about the findings of all the work on Ex-circs.

**Sabbatical Officer Update: Micaela Panes (VP Postgraduate)*** Are on phase 2 of the (ADD) to try and inform PGRs of the new rights and the changes that occurred with the new contracts.
* Survey popped in the chat and request to fill it in and share – do not need to be teaching yet to fill it in, it is completely anonymous, only asks for a college. Trying to establish where issues are so there is an understanding of what needs to be improved.
* LWO asked what Micaela’s plans are in her next year as she has now been re-elected. Micaela clarified it will be to improve the contracts that she managed to get implemented last year, improve to PG community, looking at supervision for PGRs and what they can do when that relationship isn’t working as it should or alternative for personal tutor outside of the supervision.

**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 high street 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 high street 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:**  |
| **N/A** |