

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

**Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

Dr Amanda Piesse (Chair), Dr D McGrath (Secretary), Dean of Students (Dr G Whyte); Senior Lecturer (Dr A Douglas); Deputy Treasurer's Representative (Janet Byrne), Senior Tutor (Dr M O'Regan), Dr E MacCarthaigh; SU Welfare Officer (Ms O Foley), GSU President (Mr R Hodson), Director, College Disability Service (Mr. D Treanor).

Vice-Provost (CAO) (Prof P Prendergast); Deans' Representative (Prof C Williams); Head of School (Prof N Claffey); Acting College Secretary (Ms A FitzGerald);

Ms G Conroy,  
SS/08-09/50 only SU education officer (Mr H Sullivan)

**SECTION A**

**Minutes** The Minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 were approved, following amendment to minute SS/08-09/35, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence, to read 'Money was being sourced to fund the first year of an appointment of a qualified childcare manager/Day Nursery line manager reporting to the Chief Operating Officer; the post would have to be self-funding in the future.', and signed.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes** Matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and are recorded below, (see Minutes SS/08-09/47, SS/08-09/48.).

**Trinity Experience Forum** The executive had met last week. The delay in the questionnaire roll-out by the Geary Institute had been to avoid a clash with scheduled examinations within the university sector; it was now expected to proceed. The Dean of Students would liaise with the Dean of Research.

**Estimates** The SSC submission had been made, following a briefing meeting with the COO; it would be considered by the Provost and Treasurer prior to submission to the Finance Committee and thence to Board on 25<sup>th</sup> February.

**SS Strategic Planning** Three interrelated Student Services priorities emerged from the consultation process that had taken place between June and October 2008:

- The development of a Student Centre and space for Student Services that are both fit for purpose.
- Improving Student Services' profile and better delivery of accessible services enhanced by IT systems and communications' technologies.
- Negotiating a realistic funding base within college for undergraduate students, while establishing a formula for funding postgraduates, international, mature and TAP students, and students registered with the Disability Services.

The consultation process report had been submitted to the Vice Provost and Chief Operating Officer, for integration into the overall College Strategic Plan. A funding base plan needs to be developed for Student Services, similar to the per student/capita funding model for the Library and IS Services, in the context of the Student Service Charge, in particular in light of the expected HEA report on government cuts and the expected proposal on the

introduction of tuition fees. Clarification on the nucleus groups with the Strategic Planning and Funding Group would be sought, from the Vice Provost and Chief Operating Officer, by the Dean of Students.

**Draft Student Charter** Mr Hugh Sullivan, SU Education Officer was welcomed, and invited to present this item. A review of the current Student Charter had been undertaken in MT by a working group consulting with the Chair. A comparative review of 9 higher education institutions' Student Charters had been carried out, looking at format, sections covered, status of charter, qualitative assessment. Format was generally an outline of what students would expect from the institution, and what would be expected by the institution from students. A small working group consisting of the SU Education Officer (or nominee), Chair of SSC, Senior Tutor, GSU representative, Dean of Students, and Admin Officer from VP area, was proposed and approved. It would be called to meet by the SU Education Officer. Its brief would be to decide on the detailed content and means of distribution of a new student charter, and to propose its inclusion in the College Strategic Plan by February 28<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**Self Assessment of Student Services Committee** A final draft of the self evaluation form was tabled for approval. Following agreement on the date by which it should be returned, Ms Conroy would circulate it electronically to the Committee, for completion and return to the Acting Secretary to the College.

**Tutorial Service Annual Report 2007-08** Expressing her gratitude to the STO staff, the Senior Tutor presented the report. It had been an extremely busy year for the Senior Tutor's Office. The Tutorial Service review carried out in November 2007 had presented many challenges for the office. With the help of a working group, the recommendations from the review had been discussed, leading to suggestions for implementation. The services offered by the STO had been reviewed and changes implemented both in regard to the line management of the College Day Nursery and the publication of the Student Diary. The immediate line management of the College Day Nursery had been taken over by the Chief Operating Officer and the Diary, Ms Conroy's initiative first published in 2004, had, in a seamless transition, been published by the SU with resounding success. The two major projects for the office included planning for the introduction of tutors for postgraduates and the Peer Mentoring programme in conjunction with the Student Counselling service. A new administrative officer had been appointed to plan the extension of the service to postgraduates as well as carrying out additional duties in the office.

The number of applications for Financial Assistance had continued to rise with a corresponding increase in the workload of the office. In all, students received awards, of whom just over 80% had been mature students. Two hundred and thirty Sports Centre charge waivers had been processed. The College Academic Appeals Committee had heard 9 cases.

The development of IS systems to facilitate the work of the office was ongoing. During the year two new websites had been developed for the office and for orientation. The orientation website had a large number of visits during the month of September and continued to be popular into the following months. Both of these sites were works in progress. A new database for managing financial assistance requests had been developed



The pilot mentoring scheme with JF Science Course under the umbrella of orientation and continuing on from Freshers' Week had been implemented and a review subsequently undertaken. New booklets had been developed in conjunction with the Admissions Office for distribution to incoming students. A direct mailing from the Senior Tutor to each new entrant had been put in place. Orientation merited further development.

The recruitment, induction and training, and meetings of tutors continued, with 17 tutors resigning and 20 new tutors appointed during the course of the year. During the year a handbook for tutors had been compiled and distributed. Training for new tutors, workshops and social evenings had been organised.

It would be vital that the office continue to implement the recommendations of the review group and to develop a vision for the Service for years to come. Plans for the year included launching the new advisory/tutorial service for postgraduates and extending JF mentoring college wide. The possibility of moving to a Student Services Centre would be addressed, new IT systems investigated, and plans for the next 5 years drawn up.

The Chair thanked the Senior Tutor for the clear and comprehensive report, commending the Tutorial Service for its continuing valuable contribution to the student experience.

Mr Hodson (GSU President) commented that orientation for new postgraduate students registering in April would enhance their student experience. He was advised to discuss this in the first instance with Graduate Studies Office.

**Disability Service Annual Report 2007-08** This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**Feedback from Heads Forum** The most recent meeting on January 16<sup>th</sup> had discussed: 1) the visit to Queens University Belfast Student Centre; comments had been submitted to the Chief Operating Officer; 2) inclusion of the role of Dean of Students in the Statutes, concluding that this could not be accommodated in the upcoming revision; 3) the future expansion of the Heads Forum as proposed by the Chief Operating Officer; 4) Coffee morning to fundraise for TVOF; 5) e-strategy public meeting to be held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January; 6) Orientation survey carried out by Senior Tutor's Office; 7) College membership of CSSI covering all of the student services to be taken out 8) Estimates. Proposed changes to the Heads Forum would be discussed as an agenda item at the next meeting.

**Any Other Business** Implications for Student Services of the recently published Regulations governing the Official Languages Act 2003 would be investigated.

Terms of Reference for the Day Nursery Advisory Group were in the process of being defined, and would be presented to the Committee for approval.


*There were no items in this section*

**Capitation Committee**

The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008. The Committee would discuss the Capitation Committee draft Terms of Reference at the next meeting.

**Financial Assistance Committee**

The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

Signed:..........  
Date:.....03.02.09.....