Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 28th January 2009

Present
Dr. Amanda Flesse (Chair), Dr. D. McGrath (Secretary), Dean of Students (Dr. G. Whyte), Acting College Secretary (Ms. S. Flanagan), Dean of Graduate Studies (Dr. I. Corby), Academic Registrar (Ms. A. Byrne), Head of Academic Affairs (Mr. B. Meade), Provost (Dr. C. Condon), Treasurer (Dr. A. Parsons), Head of Graduate Studies (Mr. D. Meade), President (Mr. J. Meade), Vice-President (Mr. D. Meade).

Apologies
Ms. C. Counihan

In attendance
Ms. G. Counihan

SECTION A

SS/08/09/08
Minutes. The minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2009 were approved, following amendment to minute SS/08/09/02, final paragraph to be replaced by: "Further to the Senior Tutor's statement that orientation meetings continue development, Ms. Howden commented that new postgraduate students who register in April are not currently provided with information in the form of an information pack. It was agreed that a new orientation programme for new students should be put in place. With this amendment in place, the minutes were accepted as a true record and signed.

SS/08/09/09
Matters Arising from the Minutes. Matters arising from the minutes were discussed and are recorded below. (See Minutes SS/08/09/00, SS/08/09/01.)

SS/08/09/10
Trinity Experience Forum. The Dean of Students reported that the Trinity Experience questionnaire had been sent to all universities. The student satisfaction surveys will be a valued result.

SS/08/09/01
SS Strategic Planning. The Dean of Students reported that the discussions for the development of a funding base plan for Student Services would be direct liaison with the Vice-President. Dr. Flesse and he would see the process in motion.

SS/08/09/02
Estimates. Following advice from the Treasurer’s Office and subsequent necessary consideration and discussion among the heads of service, a Heads of service agreement on the Student Services submission to the Estimates had emerged: requests of €30,000 for the Tutorial Service to extend the postgraduate advisory service starting for a 2nd year, €52,000 for CP workshops, €10,000 for personal councillors, and €5,000 for assessment and screening of students with dyslexia. It was noted that increasing diversification of the student body would continue to increase the need for extra resources in student services. This had been articulated as part of the Student Services strategic planning process in the following way:

SS/08/09/04: "Negotiating a realistic funding base within college for under-graduate students, while establishing a formula for funding postgraduate, international, mature and TAP students, and students registered within the Disability Service."
Disability Service Annual Report 2007:08

Expressing his gratitude to the Disability Service staff, Mr. Trenor presented the report, which represented the highlights of 2007-08, with a financial report 2006-07. A College-wide disability accessibility audit had been carried out to identify a range of barriers that potentially restrict access for people with disabilities in Trinity College, and to provide an indication as to the likely cost estimates of adjustments. A review of supports and services for students with disabilities had been carried out which resulted in college adopting a new Code of Practice applying to staff with disabilities. College had adopted the Accessible Information guidelines, the first University in Ireland to take this step. Use testing of resources such as the library database and Webrose got underway. ES had developed strong community links with a variety of voluntary organisations representing people with disabilities. Procedures for dealing with students with temporary disabilities had been implemented.

The college had been successful in its application for funding under Strategic Initiative Funding Round Two for a project that would audit the curriculum for diversity. The Higher Diploma in Educational Studies: Disability Needs Assessment successfully ran with twenty-three participants completing the course. A quality review of the Unlink service had taken place. The core UD objectives were to embed disability issues into the culture of the University, thereby influencing the development of policies and practices, and to address the delivery of specific supports to students with disabilities. Further integration of these activities, synergies and increased collaboration with other Access Initiatives in College, and other HEIs would take place.

Financial report 2006-07 showed a significant excess of income and funds carried forward over expenditure in both the main account and in trading accounts. All funding has now been allocated against specific projects including the Disabled Students' Support Programme. An underspend and return to the HEA of €133,000 in the ESF ESF account had been due to the annual review of funds, costs are protected against individual needs and funds must be returned if students withdraw. It was suggested that reporting on spending should make this clear, and the Dean of Students asked the Director of the Disability Service to report what funds are applied for with a breakdown of expenditure and underspent for the next meeting.

In the context of unusual balance, discussion centred on the need to form a Mental Health Advisory Group in order to utilise available funds for the benefit of students with specific disabilities. Both short- and long-term, e.g. for psychological support. The Access Core Grant funding model is currently undergoing reconstruction.

Capitation Committee Draft Terms of Reference The Dean of Students would meet with the Capitation Committee Working Group on Terms of Reference to agree the wording of Objective 1.1.1 and Duties 4.1 and 4.2. It would be essential to identify the locus of power in relation to proposed reforms/changes. Mr. Hodgins undertook to convene the Group. This being clarified it was hoped that the draft terms of reference might be agreed at the next SCU meeting.

College Day Nursery The Committee considered and approved the proposed job description for Day Nursery Manager with one change in the Person Specification that "A person understanding and knowledge of children and childcare sector, with knowledge of current national and
Proposed changes to Heads' Forum

The meeting noted that the COO had proposed that a Student Services Management Team would be formally established, that would align student services with College committee structures to centralize all activities relating to the direct provision of non-academic services to students, and liaise directly with Student Services Committee as a principle committee of Board. The Heads' Forum were broadly in support of the proposal.

Feedback from Heads' Forum

The most recent meeting had discussed:

1) the Student Services Team;
2) the proposed Senior Management Group; the issue of annual leave in the context of the new academic year structure, and
3) the provision of student services supports to the associated Colleges. The Dean of Students will meet with the Typical in relation to this last item.

Any Other Business

Trinity Foundation had proposed a fundraising initiative to enter a Trinity team in the Dublin City Marathon with the ambition of generating up to €500,000 through sponsorship. This initiative would be launched on 24th February.

The Committee agreed that a Mental Health Advisory Group should be formed. Dr. McGrath would work to co-ordinate its formation.

SECTION B

There were no items on this section.

SECTION C

There were no items in this section.

Signed: [Signature]
Date: [Date]