

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 28th April 2009

<i>Present</i>	Dr Amanda Piesse (Chair), Dr D McGrath (Secretary), Dean of Students (Dr G Whyte); Vice-Provost (CAO) (Prof P Prendergast); Senior Lecturer (Dr A Douglas); Acting College Secretary (Ms A FitzGerald), 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).
<i>Apologies</i>	Deputy Treasurer's Representative (Janet Byrne), Deans' Representative (Prof C Williams); Head of School (Prof N Claffey);
<i>In attendance</i>	Ms G Conroy; Prof M Jones for item SS/08-09/102

SECTION A

SS/08-09/95	Minutes The Minutes of the meeting held on 31st March 2009 were taken as read, approved following amendment to remove Dr E MacCarthaigh from <i>Present</i> and record him under <i>Apologies</i> , and signed.
SS/08-09/96	Matters Arising from the Minutes Matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and are recorded below, (see Minutes SS/08-09/97, SS/08-09/98, SS/08-09/99, SS/08-09/100, SS/08-09/101).
SS/08-09/97	College Day Nursery The Chair reported that interviews for the post of Day Nursery Manager had been held, two of the three candidates being appointable. As the post is self-funding, no delay in making the appointment is expected.
SS/08-09/98	Student Counselling Service Annual Report 2007-08 The urgent need for suitable accommodation for the Service had been discussed at Board. Phoenix House was expected to be ready for the purpose in September 2009.
SS/08-09/99	Postgraduate Advisory Service The Chair reported on the first report from the Committee review group, in which a number of recommendations concerning the Students Services Committee had been made. As there would be two further stages in the review process, the Committee Review Group Report would be discussed as an agenda item at the next Committee meeting on 26 th May. In the meantime, it was clear that the Student Services Committee was in a position to approve the formation of advisory groups and working parties such as the postgraduate advisory service and the nursery advisory group, although it would be wise to adhere to the nomenclatures recommended in the review group report.
SS/08-09/100	Feedback from Heads Forum The views of the planning team on the Student Experience, comments and input from stakeholders having been noted, had been submitted for factoring into the composite Strategic Plan.
SS/08-09/101	College Health Service Annual Report 2007-08 Dr MacCarthaigh proposed and the Committee agreed that there should be a move towards a student sick leave policy for up to 7 days absence without medical certification, excluding absence from examinations.

SS/08-09/102 **Capitation Committee Annual Report 2007-08** The Senior Dean, Professor M Jones, presented the report. The main role of the Capitation Committee is to apportion to the capitated bodies the capitation fund assigned to it by Board from the capitation fee. Capitation Committee minutes are submitted to Student Services Committee. The formally constituted capitated bodies are CSC, DUCAC, SU, GSU and Publications Committee. The capitated bodies are recognised by Board as having responsibility for the governance and regulation of student-led activities within the College. The Capitation Committee generally meets once a term, and met 3 times in 2007-08. The financial statements for each of the capitated bodies are audited independently each year and a high level review is conducted by the Treasurer's Office representative and Senior Dean, a practice dating back to when Capitation Committee was a sub-committee of the Finance Committee. The financial statement of the Capitation Committee 2007-08 had been presented to the Finance Committee on the 17th December 2008. Adjustment of the capitation fund allocation occurs annually from the previous year's baseline, on a funding calculation agreed between the Treasurer's Office and the Capitation Committee to govern the ring-fenced, direct student payment towards the functioning of the capitated bodies. This is then approved by the Capitation Committee.

There had been no significant financial difficulties in any of the capitated bodies in the year in question. The SU had repaid in full the restructuring loan from College. DUST, to be wound up in 2008-09, had yet to collect some debts from College departments, which might result in legal action. Trinity Ball 2008 had been a profit-returning sellout, and one of the most successful ever held, in conjunction with MCD; the agreement with MCD limited the liability of College should the Ball return a loss. The collection of a great many of the outstanding debts in Publications had been managed ably.

Other issues on the Capitation Committee agenda during the year included the Luce Hall Redevelopment/Student Centre, the Student Sports Centre Charge, Capitation Committee Terms of Reference, and a complaints procedure in relation to Publications. The complaints procedure was in place and its effectiveness would be kept under continual review. A Terms of Reference Working Group had been set up, in response to a Committee decision to agree a protocol for dealing with referendums on voluntarily agreed student levies and charges. Attendance by the nominated delegate from Student Services at Capitation Committee meetings was important to the Committee; the Committee queried whether it could nominate a delegate to Student Services Committee.

Discussions would shortly take place between capitated bodies on the allocation mechanism, as the GSU seeks to mainstream the funding for a second sabbatical officership; increases in post-graduate student numbers and the consequent need for increased support would be taken into account. The Senior Dean was thanked for the clear report.

SS/08-09/103 **Access Plan 2009-2013** Developed in response to the requirement of the HEA *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013*, the Plan sets out College's policy on equity of access, contains an account of its present position and indicates targets for enhanced access and a series of recommendations to facilitate meeting those targets. Currently the non-traditional undergraduate intake target is 15%; it comprises access students, student with disabilities and mature students. This target is usually exceeded

with actual intake numbers ranging between 17% and 20% of u/g CAO entrants. The aim is to increase this target to 22% entrance rates according to key access criteria, with specific targets of 13% new entrance rates by under-represented social-economic groups; 11% new entrants in Engineering, Math and Science, and 10% increase in students with a disability (excluding specific learning difficulties). 10 recommendations underpin the draft Access Plan.

Discussion centred on the necessity for taking into account the additional strain the policy and its targets would place on student services, in particular the tutorial, counselling and health services. Furthermore, as 80% of current recipients of financial assistance are mature students, the strain on those limited funds would be unendurable. It was suggested that the Senior Lecturer might amend the draft Plan to reflect these concerns.

- SS/08-09/104 **Student Centre** It was decided that Paul Coote should be invited to the next Student Services Committee meeting, to inform the Committee on the current situation, and future processes in regard to the proposed Student Centre.
- SS/08-09/105 **Feedback from Heads Forum** The most recent meetings on 9th and 23rd April had discussed: 1) Student Services management committee; 2) E-strategy; 3) Relevant IT; 4) Mental Health Advisory group; 5) Fitness to Practise Policy; 6) Garda Vetting Protocol; 7) Student Centre; 8) Access Plan.
- SS/08-09/106 **Any Other Business**

SECTION B

There were no items in this section

SECTION C

- SS/08-09/107 **Financial Assistance Committee**
The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 2nd April 2009.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

A. P. O'Sullivan
26th May 09