

# The University of Dublin

## Trinity College

### Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 1st February 2011

*Present* Dr. S. Barrett (Chair); Dr D. McGrath (Secretary); Senior Tutor (Dr. C. Laudet); Senior Lecturer (Dr A. Douglas); Dean of Students (Dr. G. Whyte); Board Representative (Dr. Hugh Gibbons); Head of School (Dr. Sarah Smyth); Head of Sport and Recreation (Ms. M. Tanner); Treasurer's Representative (Ms. Ciara Lynch); SU President (Nikolai Trigoub-Rotnem); SU Welfare Officer (Ms. Steph Fleming); GSU President (Ms. Dearbhail Lawless)

*Apologies* College Secretary (Ms A. FitzGerald);

*In attendance* Mrs. A. Williams.

Following introductions around the table the Chair welcomed Dr. Sarah Smyth and Dr. Hugh Gibbons to the Committee.

### SECTION A

**SS/10-11/59 Minutes** The Minutes of the meeting held on **26<sup>th</sup> October 2010** were taken as read, approved. .

**SS/10-11/60 Matters Arising from the Minutes** The Chair will meet with Prof. Cyril Smyth with regard to item **11/53**

**SS/10-11/61 Postgraduate Advisory Service** The Senior Tutor reported that she had spoken with the Treasurer regarding the funds in the Research Overheads Budget which were not always utilised. There should be sufficient funding available until September 2012 provided no further cuts are implemented.

**SS/10-11/62 Day Nursery Fees** Following Board approval the Student Services Committee approved the proposed 9% fee increase as discussed between the Chief Operating Office, the College Secretary, the Chair, Dr. McGrath and the Treasurer. This will be phased in over 2 years, 4% this year with a further 5% next year to all parents. A number of staff parents met with the Chief Operating Officer to express their displeasure at this increase. It was confirmed that staff do not contribute to the Student Services Charge.

**SS/10-11/63 Dean of Students' Report** The Dean of Students reported that five meetings of the Heads' Forum had taken place since 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**1. International students:** The proposed joint Foundation Programme with UCD is expected to impose a disproportionate burden on Student Services eg 25% mental health workload at present is International Students. Mr. John McParland, Head of International Office met with Heads of College Health, Counselling, Sports and Disability to discuss concerns which have arisen over financial constraints this will impose on College Services. Although it is envisaged that most international students would have sufficient English, the question arose over the need to

provide interpreters for those who may not. The Dean of Students is preparing a memo on the demands International Students place on Student Services.

2. **Strategic Plan:** Individual Students Services have asked for a review of the Strategic plan. This has been reported back to the COO.
3. **Student Death Protocol:** The present procedure works well for Undergraduates. However it was suggested that perhaps Senior Tutor's Office should also report Post graduate student deaths as there appear to be some glitches with the present system.
4. **Impact of Budgetary Cuts re: Funding:** Efficiency of services will be maximised.
5. **Hunt Report:** This report, which deals with the adequacy of Student Services for International students, was discussed.

**SS/10-11/64 Student Death Protocol** The Student Death Protocol Document was circulated by the Senior Tutor. It was agreed that there is room for improvement with regard to circulation of notification of a student death. It was suggested that both undergraduate and postgraduate student death protocols should be rolled out from Senior Tutor's Office but linked in with Dean of Graduate Studies. Also the blanket email wording advising of the death could be varied. Several issues were raised with regard to lack of feedback to a student's class regarding arrangements for memorial service etc. More liaising between the SU Welfare Officer and class reps was suggested. An updated version of the Protocol will now automatically be circulated to all Departments at the beginning of each academic year. The Senior Lecturer reported that the first posthumous degree was conferred before Christmas.

**SS/10-11/65 Communications Advisory Group Memo re: Student Orientation** One of the findings of the communications audit, chaired by the Provost last year, was the 'Information Overload' to incoming students during Student Orientation week. Suggestions to overcome this issue from the Student Services Committee included:

- Rescheduling Orientation Week and Library Tours to the week before Registration.
- Encouraging in-coming Freshers to navigate the TCD Website prior to arrival.
- The production of a small information booklet, 3-4 pages, with guidelines to TCD Website highlighting links to more in depth information, including one page of FAQs.
- Introducing Student to Student mentoring
- Staging smaller events later in the term over a longer period.
- More tutor to student emails rather than mass emails which students tend to ignore.
- Introducing a College Facebook page with postings throughout the year.
- Displaying large eye catching posters around the Campus.

The Senior Tutor will liaise with Patricia Callaghan and Leona Coady prior to next year's Orientation week.

The Student Union Welfare Officer requested that any change in the Orientation timetable be passed to the Students' Union before circulation.

**SS/10-11/66 AOB** None was reported.

**SECTION B**

*There were no items in this section*

**SECTION C**

**SS/10-11/67 Capitation Committee Minutes**

These were noted. The Student Union Welfare Officer reported that the wording for the Student Referendum was passed at this meeting and confirmed that the Students Union must remain neutral on this issue. Voting will take place in two weeks time. The proposed student levy will be €69 rising by €2 annually for 20 years.

Signed:.....

Date:.....