

VIC CASAMBROS COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

NOVEMBER 2011

ISSUES RAISED SINCE LAST COUNCIL AND RESULTS THEREOF:

BUSINESS SCHOOL:

On several occasions recently lots of Stafford Students within the Business School have contacted myself asking for help with regards to their poor treatment by the university. With help from Jamie we resolved some issues level 5 were with regards to contact times. With the help of Jamie, Kim and Emma we four officers went along to a focus group with a big cohort of Level 6 students and helped lobby the Uni and managed to secure them the whole group extensions to all their deadlines, blanket course wide extenuating circumstances and extra lectures to make up for the missing ones.

FACULTY OF COMPUTING ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

As the officer assigned to work with FCET, I went along to a focus group that FCET held and was aimed at Level 6 students. It was looking at the poor NSS results of the past year and looking at they can respond to that and improve the student experience for level 6. There were some positive outcomes and good feedback exchange. FCET are planning on holding more of these session in the up and coming months. The next stage is to see how the faculty responds to the feedback and if they implement any changes.

NUS ACTIVISM DAY:

I headed down to London on the free activism training day that was held at Goldsmiths College at the University of London. There was loads of great workshops on various ways to listen to students, lobby the university and lead on campaigns. If NUS hold more of these free events then I'd advise as many students as possible to sign up.

ONGOING PROJECTS:

CACH

Anna from Chase Against Crimes of Hate (a group for which I'm an executive member) came along to help deliver a workshop about hate crime. It looks at the effects, spotting it and how to report it. I went

along with many of our managers and many found it a very useful session. Out of this I plan to support Kim with the implementation of a new group aimed at looking at hate crimes within the union to look and fighting and preventing them.

INTERFAITH WEEK

We had a few different local faith groups from the community come in and hold information stalls, particularly useful for any students who were part of a faith for which we don't have our own setup student run societies, e.g. (Jewish and Quakers). We also held an Interfaith quiz on the Beaconside Campus with many objects donated by the local faith groups. This was well attended with a very diverse range of students taking part. We had both home & international students attending, members of the CU, and other students of various faiths included those who of little or no faith. Those who attended had lots of good banter and some mini debates formed amongst various groups.

WELCOME

I sit on the WPG (*Welcome Planning Group*) and WUG (*Welcome to University Group*) groups and looking at the welcome arrangements for the students due to join us in January and March. Dependant on numbers Myself, Kim, Jamie & Emma shall be going down to Heathrow towards the end of the Christmas holidays and welcome new students.

NSS SVS PTES ETC

I continue to sit on SRRSG (*Student Response Rate Strategy Group*) we've been looking at the past years results and participation rates. We've been looking at the marketing of the campaigns and incentives offered to try and get much better response rates from the NSS and other surveys next year. This is especially important with things like the Key Information Sets (KIS) that are part of the HE White Paper.

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY:

The Union's digital engagement group has been working on aligning all the different social media arms the union has. We've been consolidating and closing down some of the redundant and duplicated groups/accounts. We're also going back to using HootSuite across the union enabling different outlets to be able to work with each other and support each other, e.g. The venues answering at night times.

COMMENCEMENT OF PROJECTS:

BME FORUM

We had the first meeting of the new forum, and NUS Black Students Officer Kanja Sesay came up and presented to the group about the importance of Liberation both locally and on a national scale. From this we're looking at arrange a second meeting from which we shall elect the chair who shall also sit on council. The forum is also looking at developing a new student's guide, aimed at filling in all the useful information that you aren't currently told e.g. Where are the halal butchers in Stafford, or where can you go to get hair in stoke?

BLUEPRINT WORK

The officer team have jointly been working on development a Blueprint on a ideal student life; which we presented to the university in its draft form. I worked on the virtual learning section looking at how this can be better utilized across courses and faculties. I also worked on the accommodation section, looking at how these services are advertised to students, the problems with segregation of internationals etc.

"ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE CONFERENCE"

Tuesday 15th November saw myself and Margaret Mulholland the membership services manager head to London for the "Enhancing Student Experience Conference" in London. This same event that was attended "Virtually" by staff members from the university who be watched certain keynotes and seminars from Winton Square. It was great looking at a how other institutions work with their students unions and the relationships (or lack of in some cases) they share. It was interesting that in a session entitled "working with students' unions" the panel was made up of exec from Nottingham University but their students union was not present... Seemed somewhat ironic to me.