

Staff-Student Liaison Committee Meeting
31st October 2013

10am, Informatics Forum – Rm 1.15

Present:

Alex Lascarides - Deputy Head of Graduate School (DHGS)
Fraser Pullar – Informatics Graduate School Administration Staff
Miltiadis Allamanis (on behalf of Krzysztof Geras) – IANC Representative
Sergio Elizondo Gonzales – CISA Representative
Chris Thompson – ICSA Representative
Chris Banks – LFCS Representative

Absent:

Susen Rabold – ILCC Representative
Thomas Suslak – DTC Representative
Andrew McPherson – ICSA Representative

Institute representatives were reminded to contact their Institute members/students to notify them of upcoming Staff-Student Liaison Meetings so that any issues they may have can be raised by their representatives.

1. Quality Assurance Report

Deputy Head of the Graduate School, Alex Lascarides, gave a brief explanation of what is included within the QA Report and why it is needed.

a) Student/Student engagement

The general consensus of the Committee was that engagement between students could be improved upon. Interaction with fellow students based in the same office is not an issue but outwith this interaction is a problem. Events organised through institutes help with this but outwith institutes it was felt that more activities would be beneficial. Events similar to the trip to Firbush would help with social interaction across institutes. Events within the Informatics Forum similar to the annual Burns Supper would encourage students to get to know one another socially. The DHOGS informed students that although these events need to be student led there is funding available to help out. The DHOGS suggested that student reps discuss potential events then bid for IAD funding to cover the costs.

b) Student/Staff engagement

The Committee expressed that they were happy with the current levels of staff/student engagement. The feeling was that in general both academic and support staff were approachable and readily available.

Chris Thompson (ICSA Representative) has agreed to draft a short paragraph giving the view of the students on the current levels of cohesion within the student body. CT will circulate this to fellow student representatives on the Committee for review/feedback before sending the completed document to Alex Lascarides and Fraser Pullar no later than 11 November 2013

(Action Chris Thompson)

2. Postgraduate Programme Review

Alex Lascarides spoke briefly explaining the PPR process, why it is taking place and what will be expected of students during this. The following items were raised by the Committee as items they felt need addressed during the PPR

a) Cohesion within the School

The feeling within the Committee is that despite there being a good level of student interaction within institutes, on the whole cohesion between institutes and throughout the School in general needs to be improved. School wide activities were suggested as a good way of bringing all institutes together. Student Representatives identified this as a potential item which needs reviewed.

b) Communication throughout the School

There is a general feeling within the Committee that communicating resources available to students ie, English language support courses could be improved. Students feel that although there are resources available to them these are not advertised or communicated extensively enough. If students were notified of the resources available to them there is a feeling that they would be more encouraged to use them. A possible solution suggested was to have one central space where integrated information can be added and viewed. A wiki page would be useful to give information on all resources available and provide help to students who, for example, may be looking for information on who to contact for pastoral care, have personal issues or would like information on funding opportunities. It was felt that having greater communication stemming from School level would enhance the student experience.

c) Greater Training Provisions

It was felt that there could be a greater provision on teacher training with more courses being readily available. Being able to apply for a course using IAD Funds will be useful. This ties in with the need for better communication as the courses may already be available but students are simply unaware of this.

d) Funding

The IANC student representative highlighted an issue some students are having with regards to funding, particularly those approaching the end of their scholarships. The feeling is that although the cost of living has increased, student scholarships have not been adjusted accordingly and some students are feeling the pressures this brings. This may be a problem that varies throughout different institutes.