

Deputy President (Education) Report

A report by Jason Parmar

Video Podcasting (Panopto)

Late last month it was officially announced that video podcasting will be introduced in time for next academic year.

It was announced in Felix (<http://felixonline.co.uk/news/2483/lecture-podcasting-to-become-reality/>) and in the reporter (the college magazine with a large academic/staff readership).

To summarise, there have been over 1,000 successful recordings as part of the pilot scheme and in late April it was approved that a roll-out plan will be formulated.

The roll-out will need to be gradual to begin with due to resourcing so the priority is for major lecture theatres to be fitted first with a slower rollout for others.

Buddies

The Deputy President (Welfare) are finalising plans for next year's buddy scheme which should include departments giving all DepRep/Socs timetabled time solely for buddies to meet parents. We have the full support of the Head of Student Recruitment in order to aid the process and get fresher's to sign up.

For the immediate future we will very soon be publicising for parents to sign up to the scheme at www.imperialcollegeunion.org/buddies.

IDEALiSTiC

Imperial College Union will host the IDEALiSTiC alongside the IDEA sports event next week. We will be hosting 4 student union members from each of our partners from Paris, Aachen, Delft and Zurich. The conference is three days long and will run from Thursday 14th – Saturday 16th.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

After the initial decision being made back in March, it has since been finalised and press released in both Reporter and this week's Felix issue.

The student involvement was thorough and consistent for this decision involving myself, the two previous Deputy President (Education)'s and the student usability testers.

The decision was made to go with the new system, yet similarly named, Blackboard 9.0 from our old system Blackboard CE8. Having been on the board and voted in favour of this system, I can confirm that I believe this offers the largest benefit to the student body as a whole rather than Desire2Learn, Moodle or Sakai.

Student System Replacement System

The final decision is still to be made by a subcommittee of the colleges Management Board. However, after taking over this project from Alex Dahinten, I have been heavily involved in consultation and decision making in the decision. I was pitched to by all the chosen final vendors,

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Oracle (OSS), Sungard (Ellucian) and Tribal (SITS). I attended site visits with staff to analyse the systems and we had a vote on all major decisions made. Most notably, Thursday 31st May was the decision by the System Replacement Board between Sungard and Tribal with the result being exactly 50:50. Having been involved in this project since July and been analysing the systems in detail since April I believe the best student experience will be achieved with Sungard (Ellucian).

SEC Away Day Presentation

The Strategic Education Committee (SEC) is the highest up board for educational matters and it feeds directly to the College Management Board.

I have been invited to give a presentation at this year's SEC Away Day on 3rd July. The theme is the use of Technology to enhance learning.

Calendar Summary

Date	Meeting	Notes
01/05/2012	ICU Council	
03/05/2012	Exec Committee and e-Learning Strategy Committee	
04/05/2012	Interviewed for the new head of Co-Curricular Studies, Postgrad Quality Committee and wrote Engineering Studies Committee end of year paper.	
08/05/2012	ICT Student System – Queen Mary	Analysis of Tribal:SITS
09/05/2012	Buddy discussion with head of Student Recruitment and GSA Exec	
10/05/2012	ICT Student System – Southampton	Analysis of Banner System
11/05/2012	College Court	
14/05/2012	Volunteering Strategy	
15/05/2012	ICT Student System – UCL, Science Studies Committee and panel for Rectors Awards for Teaching	Analysis of Tribal:SITS
17/05/2012	ICT-Student Forum, QAAC and Trustee Board	
21/05/2012	Monthly meeting with Pro-Rector Education, Rectors Awards for supporting the student experience and ICT student system best and final offer presentations	
23/05/2012	Engineering Studies Committee and GSA Council	
24/05/2012	Postgraduate Quality Committee	
25/05/2012	Skydived in the morning, planned Personal Tutors for Welfare Seminar in the afternoon – like a boss.	
29/05/2012	ICT Student System vote meet and handover meeting	
30/05/2012	Departmental User Group Meeting	
06/05/2012	Exec, Welfare Seminar, General Meeting	
07/05/2012	Colours Committee	

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Manifesto Analysis

For reference please see my Manifesto in Appendix A.

It may appear vague and naïve by my manifesto from 15 months ago contained two real measurable pledges and four more subjective vague pledges.

The two measurable being to introduce video podcasting and to find a timetable structure that works for everyone's needs. The four vague pledges were better quality lecture material, SOLE improvements, improvements in feedback and coursework and, finally, better communication (voice to be heard).

Now at the end of my year, I can say with confidence that I believe all the pledges have been completed. Although the vague pledges are very hard to measure and, as such, are completely subjective to whether I/the Union achieved these goals, for all four I certainly feel we have made an impact and have completed them.

The controversial 8am starts, fortunately for me, fell through before I even took office and the proposed shortening of lunch times is a mere possibility for departments with no additional teaching hours/contact time being issued. This is to allow for flexibility with the co-curricular slot proposed for Monday afternoons.

Video podcasting as mentioned earlier in my report has been completed.

I ran "You Said, We Did" campaigns for Rep Week and SOLE for which the feedback I have received from students, academic staff and senior staff has been fantastic. I believe the communication on what SOLE is and how it affects the department as well as my proposals for SOLE debrief summaries from SSC's have gone down very well. The Autumn SSC Summary 2011, a document put together summarising the status, good practise, hot topics and recommendations is available on request. It covers areas of improving feedback and effective communication.

Throughout the year we have worked hard to stress the importance of reviewing coursework assessment across the college. To ensure that work isn't give for works sake, but instead that we are effectively measuring the learning outcomes we to give our students. An example of "better coursework" may be the teaching fellows (which we have been pushing for more of) in Chemistry who completely re-hauled and restructures the 2nd year Chemistry lab.

With regard to better lecture material, in my manifesto I implied this via means of utilising assistant technology/blended learning. Not only have we been very vocal on blended learning through discussions with academics, senior staff, ICT, eLSC and other means, but we also very early on in the year publically demonstrated our desire/recommendation within our NSS Response (and my SEC Presentation next month). In addition to this, we have stressed the importance of teaching quality as a significant factor to the student experience this year and it has resonated around the college from ourselves and from the Rector and senior management. This hopefully has had some impact on the quality and we should be able to see our improvements from the NSS results of 2012, 2013 and 2014.

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Appendix A – Original Manifesto

My name is Jason Parmar and I have what it takes to be the next Deputy President for Education. I'm currently a Chemistry undergraduate studying towards a four-year degree with Management.

Being an Imperial student isn't the easiest of tasks. It's difficult to balance the demanding workload we get from our respective courses with our other commitments. The proposed timetabling changes are something I take very seriously. I will fight to make sure that any changes are effective, yet reasonable, and are in all of our best interests. If elected I will work with all students and staff to find a timetable structure that fits everyone's needs.

We're not all perfect; sometimes we do miss lectures, be it because of the Eyjafjallajökull volcanic eruption or from not knowing your limits the night before. I believe it's time for us to bring in recorded podcasts for all our lecture courses. We study at a world-class university; we deserve to have ALL our lecture material to be of a world-class quality so we can be world-class graduates.

Vote J.P for D.P.E for podcasts of lecture courses.

Vote J.P for D.P.E for better quality lecture notes.

Vote J.P for D.P.E for SOLE to have more of an impact.

Vote J.P for D.P.E for improved coursework and exam feedback.

Vote J.P for D.P.E for your voice to be heard.

Representing every demographic at Imperial.

Representing you.